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Mubarak Meets Butrus-Ghali, Others on Somalia

NC1410191593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1804 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 14 Oct (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak stressed the importance of supporting Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi's efforts to stop the deteriorating situation in Somalia and to establish peace in various parts of that country through national reconciliation in order to protect the Somali people's interests and territorial integrity.

This came in a press statement issued by the presidential office today following the meetings that President Mubarak held with the OAU secretary general, the Arab League secretary general, and the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] secretary general.

The statement said that President Mubarak received today OAU Secretary General Salem Ahmad Salem, who presented a report to him on the OAU's activities and his recent contacts, particularly with regard to Somalia. Salem also reviewed the situation in Angola, Rwanda, Liberia, and developments in South Africa.

Regarding the situation in South Africa, the OAU secretary general viewed the outcome of his contacts with the Ethiopian president, who was tasked by the OAU summit held recently in Cairo with strengthening Somali national reconciliation efforts, overcoming the obstacles that have impeded the implementation of the resolutions of the Addis Ababa conference of March 1993, and achieving a just and fair peace in accordance with the bases approved by the Somali factions at that meeting.

President Mubarak then met with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali in the presence of OAU Secretary General Salem Ahmad Salem. Dr. Ghali briefed the president on the situation in Somalia and the UN role, and the two exchanged views on the future steps at the regional and international levels.

President Mubarak emphasized the importance of supporting the Ethiopian president's efforts to put an end to the deteriorating situation in Somalia and to establish peace in all Somalia through national reconciliation in order to protect the Somali people's interests and territorial integrity.

President Mubarak then held a joint meeting with Dr. Butrus-Ghali, Salem Ahmad Salem, Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, and ICO Secretary General Hamid al-Ghabid.

The meeting focused on discussing and backing the regional and international efforts to rebuild Somalia and to enable the Somali establishments to meet the requirements of the Somali people in order to achieve peace and stability all over the country.

At the end of the meeting, the secretaries general of the regional, African, and international organizations thanked President Mubarak for giving them this opportunity to hold these meetings. They also expressed their appreciation for his regional and international efforts to restore peace and stability to Somalia in the near future.

'Text' of UN Statement

NC1410213993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2005 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 14 Oct (MENA)—The UN secretary general's spokeswoman Mrs. (Therese Jashtut) issued a statement today at the end of OAU Chairman President Husni Mubarak's meeting with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali, OAU Secretary General Salem Ahmad Salem, Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, and Islamic Conference Organization Secretary General Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid, which was held to discuss the efforts being made to help consolidate and establish peace and encourage reconciliation in Somalia.

Following is the text of the statement that was released after the meeting: We reiterate in Cairo today our joint determination to search for joint solutions to Somalia's problems. We recall the provisions of the Addis Ababa Agreement of 27 March 1993 and the pledges made by the Somali political leaders as part of that agreement to pursue the peace process under the UN auspices and in cooperation with regional organizations and neighboring countries. We are committed to achieving progress in the reconciliation process and to the reconstruction process which the Somali leaders themselves initiated. We confirm our continuous adherence to the principles of cooperation and peace and confirm our joint commitment to work in a coordinated and comprehensive way to search for solutions to the difficult problems facing Somalia.

As part of our continuous efforts to consolidate peace, reconciliation, and rebuild Somalia, we call on all the Somali parties to cooperate to reach solutions to Somalia's problems.

We are currently watching the constructive role played by the region's countries, and we welcome Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi's leading role in accordance with the task entrusted to him by the OAU, and we appeal to him to continue his efforts.

The statement expresses appreciation for the achievements of the United Nations in providing humanitarian supplies and security in most parts of Somalia. We salute the military and civilians who have taken part in these efforts.

We express our thanks for the large number of countries that have contributed troops to the UN operation in Somalia. We send our sincerest condolences to the soldiers who sacrificed their lives. We also send our sincerest condolences to the Somali families who have lost their sons and express our sincere sympathy to all the Somali people.

We praise the humanitarian work of the nongovernmental organizations and call on them to continue and intensify their efforts.

The statement welcomes the aid donor countries' agreement to participate in a humanitarian conference on Somalia, which is scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa between 8 and 10 November.

The statement appeals in particular to the OAU, the Arab League, and the Islamic Conference Organization countries to contribute troops and funds that the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM 2) needs in order to fulfill its task successfully.

It calls for setting up a special fund for rehabilitating the Somali people and reconstructing the country. It urges all the African countries, the Arab world, and Islamic society to contribute generously to setting up and operating this fund.

ICO Official Issues Statement

NC1410215193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1950 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 14 Oct (MENA)—Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] Secretary General Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid has said that the ICO is ready to help other organizations to find a political solution to the Somali crisis, since it has become evident to all sides that confrontation will not resolve this crisis.

In a statement he made following today's joint meeting with President Husni Mubarak, UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali, and Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, al-Ghabid underlined the ICO's support for the new direction announced recently by the U.S. Administration and the Somali factions, which calls for searching in the future for a solution through dialogue and negotiations. He also stressed the importance of continuing determinedly with the frank dialogue and of exerting all the available efforts to achieve peace and national reconciliation in Somalia.

Dr. al-Ghabid called for persisting with the efforts to restore confidence between the Somali factions so as to have an opportunity as soon as possible to disarm them and to find a mechanism that will allow this task to begin without harming any of the Somali factions.

Al-Ghabid said that the disarmament of the factions is an important part of the Addis Ababa agreements signed in March 1993, on which depends the implementation of the other clauses in these agreements, the most important of which is the formation of a transitional national council and local councils and the implementation of the reconstruction and rehabilitation projects.

Al-Ghabid proposed the establishment of a follow-up committee chaired by the OAU that will undertake to implement the Addis Ababa agreements; it will include the Arab League, the ICO, the Nonaligned Movement, the Horn of Africa committee, and representatives from the countries neighboring Somalia. He added that the committee he is proposing could undertake other tasks with the Somali factions inside Somalia and also meet with representatives of these factions in Addis Ababa.

He said that this initiative is in line with the new direction that aims to look for a political solution to the Somali crisis and is in response to the desire shown by Somalia's neighboring countries to contribute positively to the success of the peace process.

The ICO secretary general stressed his complete agreement with the UN secretary general and U.S. President Bill Clinton on the need to give a basic role to the regional organizations to handle such crises and try to avert them in the future.

Musa on Egyptian Role

NC1510154593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said today that the reasons for Egypt's interest in the Somali issue are known. Somalia is a big problem in the Horn of Africa, which is a sensitive area because it links the Middle East and Africa. He affirmed that the effects of the disturbances in Somalia will not be limited to the countries of the Horn of Africa, but will affect stability in the region and the Arab and African worlds.

The foreign minisier said that unless current developments lead to national reconciliation and stability, Somalia could return to square one. He said the U.S. forces are scheduled to withdraw from Somalia in six months. Therefore, agreement must be reached on national reconciliation and the rebuilding of Somalia in accordance with the resolutions of the Addis Ababa conference and international legitimacy.

Musa said that the UN forces, including the U.S. forces, are committed to a specific program, which is to maintain Somalia's unity, assist in its reconstruction, achieve a cease-fire, and secure disarmament.

He said that in light of recent developments calls have been made for meetings and consultations. it was eventually agreed that the OAU should play a role in this issue. President Husni Mubarak, in his capacity as the current OAU chairman, summoned the organization's secretary general, whom he met with yesterday, to discuss the situation in Somalia. He also contacted Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi, who was entrusted by the recent African summit conference to follow up the situation. Musa said that the OAU secretary general conveyed a message from the Ethiopian president to President Mubarak on the issue. President Mubarak also sent a message to the Ethiopian president. The OAU secretary general presented a report on the situation in Somalia to President Mubarak.

Butrus-Ghali Summarizes Discussions

NC1510092793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Text] UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali left Cairo this morning after a 1-day visit to Egypt, during which he was received by President Husni Mubarak.

In a predeparture statement, Dr. Butrus-Ghali said that the meeting President Mubarak held yesterday with the general secretaries of the UN, OAU, ICO, and the Arab League focused on developments in Somalia and the assistance that the regional organizations could offer to the UN so that stability in Somalia can be achieved. He noted that the regional organizations have a responsibility in this matter. Dr. Butrus-Ghali added that the conferees discussed what the situation in Somali would be after the withdrawal of foreign troops and who would replace them so that stability can continue and the reconstruction of the country can begin. He added that he will discuss this issue during his tour of a number of African states, which begins today.

Arab-Israeli Talks

'Arafat Adviser Sha'th on Results of Taba Talks

NC1610185193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1550 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 16 Oct (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat and head of the Palestinian side of the Gaza-Jericho Committee, which held its first meetings in Taba last week, has praised Egypt's support on the Palestinian issue whether in the past phase of military struggle or in the current peace process. He said Egypt's support for the Palestinian issue is multifaceted and cannot be ignored.

In an interview with Egyptian journalists covering the committee meetings in Taba, Sha'th said: Egypt stands with us in peace as it stood with us in war. It offers us political and moral support. He expressed the hope that the Arab Gulf states will resume their financial support for the Palestinian issue in the coming phase.

Dr. Sha'th noted that Egypt has spared no effort in supporting the Palestinian issue. Egyptian experts have participated in the Taba negotiations. He said: In Taba we feel we are in Egypt's arms, while we did not have this feeling in Washington, which was not impartial toward the Palestinians. We will ask for Egyptian experts and specialists to participate in the joint committees between Palestine and Israel. We know that Egypt will respond to our demand.

Dr. Sha'th said the first round of the Gaza-Jericho Committee negotiations was positive, as we broke the ice between us and the Israelis. In only two days the Palestinian and Israeli sides agreed on a detailed agenda to implement the Gaza-Jericho agreement. The committee on prisoners and deportees also [words indistinct].

Sha'th said the success of the first round of the Taba talks was due to the readiness of the two sides to implement the agreement and to their real desire to promote it, in addition to the flexibility of the head of the Israeli side. He noted that the two teams have instructions to quickly implement the agreement and to reach an understanding on the entry of the Palestinian forces into Gaza and Jericho, the transfer of authority to the Palestinians, the return of evacuees, the adoption of confidence-building measures, and other measures connected with daily activity and life in the areas to which the Palestinians will return.

Sha'th said the real challenge for the Gaza-Jericho Committee which met in Taba is the need to complete all these measures within two months. He said what was achieved during two days of talks confirms that we are proceeding on the correct path.

Regarding the head of the Israeli side's statement that the control of Gaza's borders following the Israeli withdrawal will be the sole responsibility of Egypt and Israel, Sha'th said the agreement did not stipulate this. Such statements remind us of the Israeli Prime Minister's previous statements that Jerusalem will be the eternal capital of Israel. He then went back on this in Cairo after his meeting with President Mubarak when he said that this issue is subject to negotiations.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th said: When we agreed to negotiate with the Israelis, we knew what negotiations meant: that each party would present its demands. We abide by international legitimacy and by Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which underscore the inadmissibility of occupying the territory of others by force. We are demanding that Israel withdraw from the territories it occupied in 1967.

On Palestinian differences over the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, Sha'th said that differences do exist. He added: It is right for us to disagree, but this must be expressed in a democratic manner, not by force.

He went on: Real democracy allows brothers to disagree, but it is important for this to be expressed through the right channels, not through fighting. Sha'th noted that Palestinian statements since the signing of the agreement have reflected an honorable dialogue where the majority ultimately bears the responsibility and the minority practices responsible opposition and sometimes helps in the implementation of the agreement.

On some threats of physical liquidation against Palestinian leaders, Dr. Sha'th said: Those voices do not reflect Palestinian reality, and we do not take them seriously. The threats did not come from Palestine, the occupied territories, or the countries where there are Palestinian leaderships—such as Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, or Yemen. We know that some countries are encouraging these voices, but we do not care about them.

On the financial assistance which some countries have announced they will provide to the Palestinian state, Sha'th said that after signing the agreement, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat visited Arab countries to explain the agreement, because when all is said and done, Palestine is an Arab country, and the Palestinian Arab people cannot live away from their Arab brothers. Even when we have differences with some Arab countries, he said, we work to resolve them and inform those countries of our views.

Sha'th said that 'Arafat has received invitations to visit France, Britain, and some other countries. He noted 'Arafat's visits to China, Indonesia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates, and the fact that he was treated as a head of state in Indonesia and Thailand.

Dr. Sha'th said that many Arab and non-Arab countries have expressed readiness to provide assistance. We trust that this assistance is serious and forthcoming, he said. He stated that the main assistance will come from the United States, Europe, and Japan, and that the aid program will be determined during the meeting of the concerned countries in Paris next week.

On future Palestinian economic activity, Dr. Sha'th said that the trade and economic activity will be open. We will seek to reduce the imposed dependence on Israel and establish normal economic relations with all nations, he said.

IDF Plan for Prisoners' Release Detailed

TA1510115793 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 15 Oct 93 pp A1, A10

[Report by Eytan Rabin, Yerah Tal, and Aluf Ben in Taba]

[Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has proposed that most of the Palestinian prisoners and detainees be released from IDF and Prisons Authority prison facilities by 12 December. The release could even take place sooner, if Israel decides to make additional gestures.

According to the proposal, which originated in the IDF Central Command, criminals and security prisoners who did not commit brutal acts of terror will be released by 12 December. The criminals will be handed over to the custody of the Palestinian police.

The release of prisoners has been extensively discussed over the past two days by the Israeli and Palestinian delegations in Taba.

The two sides agreed yesterday that a subcommittee will be set up within the framework of the security committee working in Taba to deal with the release of Palestinian prisoners. The Palestinian delegation demanded that Israel free more than 12,000 residents of the territories held in jails and prison facilities in Israel and the territories. The demand refers to all the prisoners, including murderers and criminals.

Sources in the Israeli delegation made it clear that Israel will not let the prisoners "on the streets" before security arrangements for Gaza and Jericho are defined, but did not rule out the possibility that Israel may make a gesture and release some of the prisoners while the talks are under way.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres also said last night that he sees no reason why Palestinian administrative detainees should not be freed at once. As for the rest, he noted that the legal aspect of their release should be examined and, if there are no legal problems, they will be released as well.

Speaking before the Labor Party Bureau, Peres added that the issue of the release was the main topic of discussion in Taba and Cairo. According to him, 14,000 Palestinian prisoners are currently being held in Israeli prisons, and the Palestinians want them all released.

The foreign minister said that in the discussions with them, the Palestinian representatives claimed that the prisoners had been carrying out PLO policy and that now that the policies have changed, there is no longer reason to keep them imprisoned.

[A related report by Yerah Tal on page A4 of the same HA'ARETZ issue adds that in his address to the Labor Party Bureau, Peres also said that "the negotiations on the implementation of the Gaza and Jericho First agreement can be completed in four months, with two of them devoted to work in the committees and an additional two months needed prior to the actual implementation of the agreement.

["According to Peres, faster progress in the negotiations is being prevented by internal disagreements in the PLO which delay decisions. Peres said that Rabin met with 'Arafat in Cairo to pressure him to decide on the composition of the delegation and launch the negotiations. 'Our interest is not only to execute the agreement to the letter but also to complete it by the scheduled date,' the foreign minister said."]

The Prisons Authority and the IDF are currently discussing the definition of "serious offenders" who will not be released at this stage, according to the Central Command proposal. The IDF definition refers to a person who wounded at least two Israelis and was sentenced to 20 years in prison, while the authority believes that anyone given 15 years for committing an act of terrorism should not be released. The matter will be settled by Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, after he discusses it with Police Minister Moshe Shahal.

According to the plan, the Gaza beach facility, known as Ansar-2, will be closed. Approximately 200-300 Palestinians are currently imprisoned there, and it is believed that all of them will be freed within three to four months.

Major General Matan Vilna'i, commander of the Southern Command, visited the Qezi'ot facility several days ago and is expected to recommend that it be closed as well. Some 4,000 Palestinians prisoners and detainees are held in this facility; many of them are administrative detainees. Vilna'i was given a list of the prisoners, their offenses, and their prison terms.

According to the plan, the commanders of the regional commands will personally sign the release forms of the individual prisoners. The forms will go into effect gradually, and the prisoners will be released over a period of time. The basic assumption of the IDF proposal is that people convicted of murder will not be released.

A military source said last night that the IDF will release most of the Palestinian criminals and security prisoners not charged with serious terror acts within eight weeks. He stressed that this will be one of the confidence-building measures decided on in the Taba talks.

In their private meeting yesterday, Major General Amnon Shahaq, chairman of the Israeli delegation, and Nabil Sha'th, chairman of the Palestinian delegation, did not agree on dates but agreed in principle that the process of releasing the prisoners will be gradual.

The talks on the implementation of the Gaza and Jericho agreement will continue on 20 October in Taba, and the issue of the prisoners' release is expected to feature there again. The talks may be moved to a different site, however, as a result of logistic difficulties being experienced by the Palestinians.

In the meantime, the IDF has decided that Army camps and bases which will be evacuated upon the implementation of the agreement will not be destroyed. The IDF's Gaza Strip headquarters, located in Gaza city, will not be demolished and will be handed over to the Palestinians.

According to another recent IDF proposal, IDF troops will remain stationed in Hebron even after the implementation of the agreement with the PLO to protect the Jewish residents—some 550 people who reside primarily in Hadassah House, the Cave of the Patriarchs, Tall al-Rumaythah, and other locations.

A military source confirmed last night that this proposal contradicts the agreement with the Palestinians, but, according to him, it is inevitable in the case of the Jewish residents of Hebron. The source said that Rabin will have the final say on the matter.

"If the intention is to keep the main routes under our control and to withdraw from the centers of the cities and villages, no Jewish settlement will be located in Arab-inhabited regions except for Hebron. Hadassah House is adjacent to the Hebron casbah, right in the heart of the Palestinian residential area. The IDF is deployed according to this fact. The only possible solution will be to station a brigade in Hebron," the military source said.

Aharon Domb, spokesman of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, said last night that the settlers accept the IDF proposal. "It is inconceivable that settlements in Hebron and Joseph's Tomb will be evacuated. This would create a world war," he said.

Last night, the Likud also issued a warning against "the fact that the Israeli delegations in Cairo, Taba, and Tunis are silent regarding the PLO violations of the agreement, including the organization's failure to condemn acts of terrorism and its refusal to change the Palestinian Covenant which calls for the elimination of the State of Israel."

Islamic Affairs

ICO Warns India Against Use of Force in Kashmir

LD1710203593 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1825 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Jeddah, 17 Oct (SPA)—Secretary General of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] Dr. Hamed Algabid has expressed the ICO's great concern over the sharp escalation of the oppression practiced by the Indian Security forces in occupied Kashmir.

He expressed regret at the deliberate burning of the ancient mosque of Hazratbal. He urged the Indian Government to stop the attacks on the courtyard of the mosque and to cease immediately from acts of intimidation which had been committed against the worshippers who flocked to the mosque to pray.

The ICO secretary general also urged the government of India to respect human rights of the people of Kashmir, to lift the blockade imposed on towns and town quarters, to cancel the curfew, and to take tangible measures to end the oppression campaign to enable the Kashmiri people to decide their own future in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions which grant the people of Kashmir their inalienable right to self-determination.

World Muslim League Concerned Over Kashmir Events

LD1710221793 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2015 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Excerpts] Mecca, 17 Oct (SPA)—Shaykh Muhammad Bin Nasir al-'Abudi, acting secretary general of the World's Muslim League, has drawn attention to the seriousness of the events that are taking place in Muslim Kashmir.

In a press statement, he expressed the concern of the World's Muslim League over the reports carried by international news agencies about the siege of the mosque of "Hazratbal" in the Kashmiri capital Srinagar by the Indian army and shelling it and burning parts of its outbuildings on the pretext of pursuing some of the Kashmiri resistance fighters who took refuge in the mosque. [passage omitted]

He said that aggression against this mosque and others in Kashmir is an extremely serious matter because it represents an attack on Islamic shrines. This tends to heighten the struggle and increase bloodshed.

He appealed to the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] and Islamic states to draw the attention of the government of India to the gravity of the attacks on the houses of God as part of the practices of the Indian army in Kashmir, which includes attacks on civilians and pursuing Muslim Kashmiri youth under fabricated charges, as well as reports by news media about the violation of the sanctity of Muslim houses in various areas of Kashmir.

The acting secretary general of the World Muslim League [WML] added that the government of India must be reminded that attacks on mosques—the latest of which was the mosque "Hazratbal"—has aroused the feelings of Muslims everywhere in the world and those who follow these events with great concern and interest. [passage omitted].

The WML, as a representative of Islamic nations and Islamic societies, calls on the UN to exercise its influence and make the the Indian Government carry out the UN Security Council resolutions by granting the Muslim people of Kashmir the right to self-determination through a free referendum.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Warns Hamas Over 'Executions' in Gaza Strip

NC1710190193 Paris AFP in English 1750 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Gaza City, Occupied Gaza Strip, Oct 17 (AFP)—Yasir 'Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction of the PLO warned the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas Sunday [17 October] not to carry out more "executions" in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip.

A Fatah spokesman here, Sa'id 'Ayyad, told AFP the PLO had warned Hamas it would "lose the support of the population and wreck relations with us if it carries on like this."

'Ayyad was referring to the killings of three men and one woman Friday and Saturday in the Gaza Strip, two of whom belonged to Fatah. 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the armed wing of Hamas, later claimed three of the killings.

Five hundred PLO supporters protested over the killings in Gaza Sunday.

A member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's bureau in Gaza, Talal Abu-Sbitan, said Hamas "must tell us of its suspicions before deciding to execute a Palestinian."

"It is not up to Hamas, but up to the Palestinian authorities, when they are established, to decide the fate of suspects," Abu-Sbitan added.

Twelve people have been killed in the Gaza Strip since the signing of the Israeli-PLO peace accord in Washington September 13, most of them by Hamas, which opposes the peace deal.

In mid-September Fatah said it had agreed on a six-point declaration with Hamas banning all recourse to violence and guaranteeing "freedom of opinion and expression".

'Ayyad said Fatah had demanded "clear explanations" from Hamas concerning the latest killings.

"They told us the victims were collaborators, or that their behaviour was abhorrent. We were not convinced," 'Ayyad added.

Meanwhile Nabil Sha'th, head of a PLO delegation to autonomy talks with Israel, said Hamas had shown "extreme pragmatism and reasonableness in dealing with the peace process".

In comments published in Jerusalem Sunday, Sha'th said the PLO would respect the rights and security of Hamas members if they were elected to an autonomy council next year. "But we know we will beat them at the polls," he added.

Sixth PLO Executive Committee Member Resigns

NC1410203793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud Isma'il has resigned from the committee in protest against Yasir 'Arafat's negotiations with Tel Aviv. With his resignation, the number of the committee members who have resigned so far has reached six.

According to the PLO's bylaws, when a third of the 18 members resign from this committee, then it will have to be dissolved.

Fatah Military Commander in Lebanon Dismissed

NC1410144493 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has dismissed Colonel Munir al-Maqdah from his post as commander of the Fatah Forces in Lebanon and stripped him of all his organizational and military powers. According to our security correspondent, al-Maqdah was informed of this in a telephone call from the PLO leadership last night. The PLO appointed Lieutenant Colonel Badi' Kurayyim as al-Maqdah's replacement. Kurayyim formerly took part in the camps incidents east of Sidon during the period of Palestinian expansion outside the camps [during operations against Amal Movement in late 1980's].

After al-Maqdah was informed of his dismissal, local Palestinian leaders held a meeting last night. Tension now prevails in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp, particularly after al-Maqdah informed his replacement that he will not transfer authority to him. According to rumors, al-Maqdah plans to seize the Fatah Movement's offices in the camp and proclaim his insubordination to the PLO leadership.

'Abd-al-Shafi 'Not Inclined' To Rejoin 12th Round

JN1410190493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Interview with Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, chief Palestinian negotiator to the bilateral Arab-Israeli talks, by Sa'id Mu'addi; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Mua'ddi] Good evening, Dr. Haydar.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Good evening to you.

[Mu'addi] It is now a month since the signing of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, and talks to put it into effect began today. You boycotted the signing ceremonies in Washington and had reservations about it. Where do you stand now?

['Abd-al-Shafi] Looking at the provisions of the agreement, I doubt that they will produce self-determination and statehood for the Palestinians. My reservations center on the fact that peace will not endure unless founded on right and justice.

[Mu'addi] Will you go along with the mainstream thinking and continue on the same road you have taken since Madrid?

['Abd-al-Shafi] I am for democracy. I did not vote for the PLO Central Council's decision, yet I respect it. I am not doing anything to thwart it. I am convinced, however, that this will not get us our fundamental rights. What I am saying is that peace will not last if it is not fair and just.

[Mu'addi] Will you lead the Palestinian delegation to the bilateral talks, projected to resume in late October in Washington?

['Abd-al-Shafi] I am not inclined to rejoin the talks. I was neither involved in nor consulted about the agreement. The negotiations may as well be handled by those who launched and carried out the whole thing.

[Mu'addi] The PLO Central Council has endorsed the forming of a national Palestinian authority in the territories. Will you have a role to play there?

['Abd-al-Shafi] I have no wish to be officially involved in this affair, and yet I am keeping an open mind to any positive developments that the agreement may produce. I do hope that, in the end, the cause of justice will be will be served. In other words, I will not renege on my commitment to the principle of peace and a just solution reached peacefully.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, thank you very much.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Thank you.

Decision Not To Head Team Reported

TA1410182693 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, who returned yesterday to the Gaza Strip from Tunis after participating in the Central Council's meetings, has stated that he will not head the Palestinian delegation in the upcoming round of talks slated to convene in Washington. He said that those who took part in drawing up the Israeli-Palestinian accord are better suited to follow up on these talks. 'Abd-al-Shafi added that his reservations about the Israeli-Palestinian accord stems from the fact that Palestinian aims, which are self-determination and a Palestinian state, might not be achieved.

Hani al-Hasan Comments on 'Dispute' With 'Arafat

JN1510114893 Amman SHIHAN in Arabic 16-22 Oct 93 p 16

[Telephone interview with Fatah Central Committee member Hani al-Hasan in Tunis, by Raja Talab in Amman—date not given]

[Text] [Talab] What is the story behind banning you from attending the PLO Central Council meetings?

[Al-Hasan] I came here especially to attend the PLO Central Council meetings. Before that, my house was stormed by the PLO Executive Committee chairman's security personnel. This was meant to embarrass me and prevent me from taking part in the Council meetings. However, as you know, Fatah members are not afraid of confrontations. When I came here, I was surprised that some people told me either vote in favor of the [Gaza-Jericho] agreement or remain silent, or enter and remain silent and vote in favor, or else you will be replaced. Naturally, I rejected this entire bargain.

[Talab] So, this was Yasir 'Arafat's decision?

[Al-Hasan] Yes, he insisted on that because this time he wanted all the conferees to vote in favor of the agreement. He was afraid that Fatah representatives in the PLO Central Council would not vote in favor of the agreement. He also made me another offer as a compromise solution, that is, to make a personal decision and announce that I did not want to attend the Council meetings. I refused and said that I wanted to attend to express my opinion. Besides, the theory of one party that calls on all to say yes altogether and no altogether is what led to the fall of the Soviet Union empire. Moreover, What is happening is not in line with the Fatah congress resolutions nor with the principles and objectives of the Palestine National Council [PNC]. Hence, we all should reach a minimum level of understanding. In other words, the issue here is not a voting issue even if the voting is on something that does not contradict the Fatah congress objectives and resolutions or the PNC resolutions. I insist that the PLO Central Council does not have the right to ratify the Gaza-Jericho agreement because, from a constitutional and legal standpoint, it is not authorized to endorse agreements. The PNC is the authorized body, and a popular conference should be the one granting the authorization because the agreement's contents conflict with the PNC charter. The PNC has the right to endorse or reject an agreement. Meanwhile, according to Article 6 of the PNC Bylaws, the PLO Central Council is not at all authorized to endorse any agreement. There were many attempts to prevent voicing this opinion. Perhaps Dr. Sidqi al-Dajani and Taysir Qub'ah expressed this stand during their deliberations before the PLO Central Council. I was surprised that the members' badges that allowed them to enter were distributed for security reasons and that I did not receive a badge, which prevented me from entering the hall.

[Talab] They could have treated you same as the Israeli reporters who were inside the hall?

[Al-Hasan] (laughing) Yes, this might have been possible. I think 'Arafat was upset that I met with Habash [secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine] in Damascus.

[Talab] Some information indicates that the real reason for this dispute was not the meeting with George Habash, but the meeting with Ahmad Jibril [secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, PFLP-GC], who threatened to assassinate 'Arafat—something that annoyed 'Arafat and made him believe that you support the Palestinian opposition's policy of confronting the agreement by means of force.

[Al-Hasan] First of all, I did not meet with Ahmad Jibril because he was not in Syria, but I met with Talal Naji [assistant secretary general of the PFLP-GC]. Ahmad Jibril's statement, in which he called for killing 'Arafat, was one of the reasons that I avoided meeting with him. I did not request a meeting with him. Neither was I asked to meet with him.

The second point is that I went to Damascus and persuaded the factions there to relinquish the idea of an alternative PLO. We agreed to avoid internecine fighting. They asked me: What if 'Arafat allows his police to attack us in the future? I told them that we will go and bury our martyr with tears in our eyes, but we will not fight each other, because internecine fighting among Palestinians will give Israel an opportunity to stay on the land. I also told them that we will work on the popular level to gain maximum support against the agreement, and thus, he will have only the minority on his side, just like what happened with the Madrid talks when the people were in favor of Madrid, but after few months, the atmosphere has changed.

[Talab] Are all the opposition factions against internecine fighting among Palestinians, including Ahmad Jibril's group?

[Al-Hasan] Yes, and Talal Naji told me that this is not the means of fighting the Israelis.

[Talab] There is a technical problem here, which you are fully aware of; namely, that you say no to internecine fighting on the one hand, and on the other hand, you will not recognize the future Palestinian authority. This means that there are strong possibilities for confrontation.

[Al-Hasan] The problem needs to be studied. However, my opinion is that a national consensus must be achieved, especially since national consensus is a sign that indicates that you are still working on the national line. Therefore, in our capacity as the biggest organization, we should reach an understanding with all forces on the minimum level in this regard.

[Talab] How did your colleagues inside the Fatah Central Committee who reject the agreement react to the measure taken against you?

[Al-Hasan] I do not link my position to anyone's, and they should not link their positions to mine. We are democrats, and if I have a certain opinion, it should not be reflected by others, and vice-versa.

[Talab] Are they closer to your political position in terms of rejecting the agreement?

[Al-Hasan] That's right.

[Talab] Therefore, they should have taken a position on the recent incident to support you. Why did they not do that?

[Al-Hasan] I do not know, and I cannot talk about this.

[Talab] Will this incident stop you from continuing your contacts with the opposition forces, or will it provide an additional motive for you to hold further meetings and coordination?

[Al-Hasan] I think that the creation of national unity is the most important issue for the Palestinian people.

[Talab] You met the Russian ambassador. What did you discuss?

[Al-Hasan] The meeting was a matter of protocol since he will soon end his tenure in Tunis.

[Talab] What is the basic meeting point between you and the opposition factions?

[Al-Hasan] I oppose everything that has happened since Madrid because there is nothing clear. Israel is not clearly stating that it will withdraw from a single inch of soil in the West Bank and Gaza. Furthermore, the Gaza-Jericho agreement dose not in any way refer to the nature of the final solution. All substantive issues are postponed and the issue of the land has been dealt with as an issue of disputed territories, which means they can be shared with Israel. Jerusalem has also been excluded. Therefore, discussion should have started on the final solution, and not the opposite. A major mistake was also made on the issue of settlements with the recognition of their independent sovereignty. It should have been stated that settlements must be discussed within the framework of Palestinian sovereignty over land. So the issue of sovereignty is now is disputed, because sovereignty is unspecified. The implementation of the agreement on the ground means that part of the Palestinian territory will be under the self-rule sovereignty, while the settlements will be under a parallel, Israeli sovereignty. We do not want the opposition to push the people into inter-Palestinian fighting. It must not topple the PLO or seek to set up an alternative organization. An alternative organization means the end of the Palestinian dream.

[Talal] The storming of your house was presented as an incident connected to the story of an assassination attempt on 'Arafat.

[Al-Hasan] This is an unfounded allegation. There was no assassination attempt in the first place. The storming of my house by 'Arafat's security men was aimed at intimidating me into not coming to Tunis to attend the PLO Central Council meeting. None of my people were arrested, and none of the individuals who work with me were questioned.

PLO Official in Washington Discusses Ties With U.S.

NC1710122593 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Telephone interview with Khalil Futah, "acting representative" of the PLO office in Washington, by Ramadan Husayn in Cairo, carried in the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Husayn] Mr. Khalil Futah, there is an important development now, namely the U.S. Senate's decision to aid the PLO and to lift some of the restrictions on the contacts between the PLO and the United States. This decision was preceded by another one allowing the opening of a PLO office in Washington. Mr. Khalil, can you brief us on the extent and features of this step?

[Futah] The PLO in the past had an office called the Palestinian Media Office. The U.S. Administration closed this office in 1988. We, therefore, opened another one, the Palestinian Affairs Office, under the Arab League umbrella. We have been working in Washington under the Arab League umbrella since that time. But following the signing of the agreement between the PLO and Israel, a new stage began. All these regulations on PLO movements were, in our view, unfair. Following the signing of the agreement, we started to ask for the cancellation and repeal of all these regulations so that the relationship between the PLO and the United States could be a natural one that helps to implement the declaration of principles agreement. On this premise, we asked the U.S. Administration to lift these restrictions. The administration in turn asked Congress, because these restrictions were imposed in the form of regulations. Congress gave President Clinton authority to ignore some of these regulations, but not all of them. Allowing President Clinton to turn a blind eye to some of these regulations means, first, allowing the PLO to officially reopen an office in the United States, specifically in Washington, and, second, allowing the U.S. Administration to contribute funds to international organizations that will help the Palestinian people and the PLO.

[Husayn] Mr. Futah, Dennis Ross, the U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace process, will visit the region soon. As Palestinians, how do you view this visit, especially after the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles agreement, in light of the relevant committees' meetings, and in light of the lack of progress on the other Arab negotiating tracks?

[Futah] We regard the declaration of principles we signed with Israel as just what its name implies and not as a final agreement. It is a mere declaration of principles. We hope that this agreement is implemented as soon as possible so that we can change the situation on the ground, end the occupation of Palestinian territories, and give our people the freedom to express itself. But we also look at the peace process as comprehensive. It is necessary to achieve progress on the other tracks, specifically on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, particularly since an agreement on principles has been signed on the Jordanian track. We regard the peace process as a comprehensive one, and we hope for progress on the other tracks so that peace can be comprehensive and total on all fronts.

The visits by U.S. officials and by the U.S. State Department coordinator fall within the framework of the efforts to make progress on the other tracks. Of course, we encourage this effort and hope that he will be successful in this visit.

[Husayn] But Mr. Khalil Futah, you are accused of abandoning the political game in the Middle East by signing the agreement. What is your reply?

[Futah] This is untrue and baseless. The reason is this: When we were negotiating with the Israelis, we were negotiating for temporary measures for a transitional Palestinian self-government. In other words, if we reach an agreement with Israel, then it will be a temporary one, the first transitional phase of five years. If the Arab parties negotiating with Israel reach an agreement, it will be the final one. They are negotiating on the final phase. Our brothers in the other Arab parties have always urged us to be quick in reaching an agreement on the transitional phase so as to give them a chance to make progress on their fronts. We have not deviated from this context and we still believe that the peace process must be a comprehensive one. We are part of the Arab homeland and will always remain so.

[Husyan] Mr. Futah, there is another issue, that of economic cooperation between the newborn Palestinian entity and Israel. Other Arab parties in the region might believe that it is the start of Israeli hegemony over the region. What is your reply to this?

[Futah] We do not really regard the issue as Israeli hegemony over the region because we are looking forward to achieving a comprehensive peace in the region that will benefit all the peoples in it. We are going to have a joint economic committee during the transitional phase. There will be peace in the final phase and the peace dividends will benefit all the peoples of the region. It will not be a Palestinian-Israeli measure. All the Arab regimes and all the Arab peoples will benefit from the peace dividends.

[Husayn] Mr. Khalil, reports indicate that the PLO office in Washington is holding intensive contacts with the U.S. Administration. Can you tell us about the extent of these contacts?

[Futah] The contacts with the U.S. Administration are held at high levels and not at the level of the PLO's Washington office yet, because our office's contacts remain limited since we are still under the old statutory situation. This means that once President Clinton signs the decision, we will officially and legally have freedom of movement. The contacts with the State Department are held at the highest levels. When President Yasir 'Arafat visited Washington when the agreement was signed, he raised the issue of lifting the restrictions imposed on the PLO at the highest levels, with President Clinton. He also raised the same issue in his repeated visits to the Senate and the House of Representatives. Then, when Political Department head Brother Faruq Qaddumi, Abu-al-Lutf, came to Washington and met with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, he also raised this matter. Contacts over this issue are continuing between the PLO, the State Department, and the U.S. Administration at the highest levels.

[Husayn] Mr. Futah, the Voice of the Arabs thanks you and always welcomes you. Good morning again to you.

[Futah] Thank you very much for hosting me on your program.

PLO Assesses Outcome of Committees' Meetings

NC1710115593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1010 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Oct (MENA)—The Palestinian leadership is currently assessing the outcome of the meetings of the liaison and Gaza-Jericho committees that met in Cairo and Taba last week so as to prepare for the next round of the meetings of the joint Palestinian-Israeli committees.

Informed Palestinian sources in Cairo have told MENA that a number of the members of the liaison and Gaza-Jericho committees have gone to Tunisia to report the result of the meetings to the Palestinian leadership and receive instructions for the next stage.

The sources added that the Palestinian leadership is now preparing working papers on the Palestinian stand regarding a number of issues before the liaison and Gaza-Jericho committees in preparation for submitting them to the Israeli side when the two committees resume their meetings.

Palestinian sources in Cairo went on to say that the Palestinian leadership is also preparing studies and working papers on economic cooperation with Israel for submission to the Palestinian-Israeli economic committee when the date for its meeting is set. They added that the working papers to be submitted to the liaison and Gaza-Jericho committees will deal with the Palestinian stand on the issues of the release of Palestinian detainees and the way to hand over authority, services, and utilities to the Palestinian side. The Palestinian working papers will also deal with the Palestinian view of where the Israeli forces will be deployed in the West Bank when self-government is applied in the Palestinian territories and when all articles of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement that was signed in Washington last month are implemented.

Ten Factions Opposed to Gaza-Jericho Hold Meeting

Details for Unified Front on Agenda

JN1510175893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Report by Sana' al-Imam from Damascus]

[Text] An expanded meeting of the 10 factions has been in progress since 1700 Paris time at the office of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's [PFLP]. The session is attended by the secretaries general and factional leaders.

A PFLP spokesman said the meeting is working out the final details of a national democratic and Islamic front. The front's program will call for restructuring the PLO on democratic bases and adhering to the Palestinian National Charter.

This morning, a delegation from the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, met with a PFLP delegation led by its secretary general, George Habash, to facilitate agreement at this expanded session. A political statement announcing the results of the meeting is expected to be issued at its conclusion.

Meeting Ends; 'Alliance' Ideals Set

JN1610064093 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Sana' al-Imam dispatch from Damascus]

[Text] The meeting of the 10 factions has ended. Sources in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] said that the conferees agreed to form a national and Islamic Palestinian alliance based on the PLO Charter and the ideals of liberation, repatriation, the right to self-determination, and full national independence. The national alliance will work to foil the Gaza-Jericho First accord, strip 'Arafat and his group of their legitimacy, and to prepare for restructuring the PLO on democratic bases.

A delegation from the Hamas Movement leadership met with a PFLP delegation, led by PFLP Secretary General George Habash, to overcome all differences and facilitate agreement at the expanded meeting.

Accord Opponents Said 'Becoming Stronger'

LD1610125593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Excerpts] Ten Palestinian groups opposed to the 'Arafat-Zionist regime agreement met in Damascus last night to make a final study of the setting up of a new leadership replacing the present PLO. The aim of the 10 Palestinian groups is to form a unified front to fight against the implementation of the compromising plans which are contrary to the aspirations of the Palestinian people. The correspondent of the Central News Unit in Beirut has sent us a report about the details of last night's meeting in Damascus.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] According to informed sources, in last night's meeting the leaders of the 10 Palestinian groups expressed their views about the new political stage. In their meeting next Saturday [23 October] they will announce their unified stance about coordination and about a joint program of action. According to these sources, it is likely that in the next meeting the leaders of the 10 groups may witness the birth of a new unified national- Islamic front whose program will be to establish a new PLO leadership replacing 'Arafat's leadership.

Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, the secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Organization referred to the insistence of the participants in the meeting about the need for a sustained fight against the Gaza-Jericho accord and for neutralizing that conspiracy against the Palestinian people. He said:

[Al-Shaqaqi, in Arabic with superimposed Persian translation] We are quite aware of the difficulties in the path of fighting against the Gaza-Jericho accord due to America's unstinting support for it. Nevertheless, our people both inside and outside occupied Palestine are daily becoming more pessimistic about the consequences of that accord, and even those who supported that accord for the first days after its signing have now stopped supporting it, while the opponents of the Gaza-Jericho Accord are becoming stronger each day inside occupied Palestine. [end recording]

Qaddumi Urges Factions To Work for Palestinian Unity

JN1610101493 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 Oct 93 pp 3, 22

["Exclusive" report by Samir al-Maqdisi]

[Text] Tunis—Faruq Qaddumi, alias Abu-al-Lutf, head of the PLO Political Department, has urged the factions opposed to the [Palestinian-Israeli] declaration of principles to rejoin the PLO. He called for them to exercise their right to oppose decisions within the Palestinian house, since this declaration has become a reality and cannot be ignored, in order to safeguard the Palestinian presence.

Qaddumi also urged groups to work together for a national dialogue to create a national semi-consensus that would thwart sharp differences and consecrate the features of our democratic principles. He said he showed reservations about the Palestinian-Israeli agreement at the PLO Central Council meetings because, although this was in harmony with his own views, he did not want to oppose the leadership's decision.

In a statement to AL-DUSTUR, Qaddumi said the coming phase will start us on a lengthy conflict to preserve our identity and achieve our legitimate rights. This prompts us to look to our Arab depth and surroundings, particularly Jordan.

Qaddumi added: From this premise, I suggested at the PLO Executive Committee's recent meeting that a portfolio on coordination with Jordan be created in the transitional government of the national authority. He stressed the need to activate the Palestinian-Jordanian committees and to hold meetings of the higher joint committee as soon as possible. He said: I believe that events since the declaration of principles, as well as a lack of time, have somewhat delayed the work of these committees. I also believe that in the next few days their members will resume the work outlined for them. This is the leadership's official position.

Qaddumi continued: This phase prompts us to maintain the PLO as an expression of our independent Palestinian identity, so it can continue to care for our national interests inside and outside the territories, as well as maintaining our embassies, offices, and central institutions and preserving our wide relations with the world until our Palestinian state is established on our national soil, God willing, with Jerusalem as its capital. The PLO is the guarantee for the success of our course and our endeavors to regain our inalienable national rights.

Qaddumi added: Here, I would like to note that the Palestinian communities abroad, particularly in the Latin American states, immediately paid the expenses and voluntarily extended assistance to the PLO in it's current financial crisis and since it is difficult for us to pay the expenses of our embassies and offices in many countries. Moreover, several workers in embassies and offices in European states managed to keep paying for their expenses and keep these office and embassies open by working in these countries. This shows both national commitment and dedication to the preservation of the Palestinian people's gains.

ALF Dissidents Reaffirm 'Commitment' to PLO Leadership

JN1610102793 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 Oct 93 p 26

[Text] Amman—AL-DUSTUR—The Arab Liberation Front-Provisional Command has issued a statement in which it reaffirmed its commitment to the leadership of the PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It also reaffirmed its disagreement with all decisions and statements made by the front's representative on the PLO Executive Committee.

The statement comes in the wake of differences and splits in the ranks of the front since the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles.

Palestinians in Libya Express Support for Peace Deal

LD1710180093 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] President leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] today received a message of support from the Palestinian popular organizations in the Libyan Jamahiriyah. The cable said: At the end of their meetings in the embassy of the state of Palestine in the Jamahiriyah, and after studying all issues and matters, the Palestinian popular organizations agreed that the [PLO-Israeli] agreement was the first step in a harsh and difficult road toward attaining the goals of our people. We are confident in the wisdom of our courageous leadership in overcoming all obstacles and surmounting difficulties, just as it has always accustomed us in the past, with its broad vision, and its ability to lead our people in the different stages of the struggle.

Brother leader, as you know, in difficult times we place ourselves and all our resources under your wise leadership in order to carry out all your instructions. May God preserve you and grant you success. With the help of the Almighty we will celebrate together by raising the Palestinian flag over the walls of Jerusalem.

Abu-Mazin: Withdrawal Must Extend to Entire West Bank, Gaza

LD1510202293 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Text] Brother Mahmud 'Abbas Abu-Mazin, member of the PLO Executive Committee, said that there will be no real or final peace in the Middle East region without a fair and comprehensive solution which relies on international legitimacy as an international point of reference and which implements fully and with accuracy resolutions 242 and 338 and the other resolutions on withdrawal from all Arab land occupied in 1967.

He said that the PLO extracted from the Israelis matters which they had hitherto considered taboo, foremost among them recognition of the Palestinian people and its rights to its land. He added that he understood withdrawal to extend to the whole of the territories in the West Bank, East Jerusalem included, and the Gaza Strip.

Brother Abu-Mazin stressed that each clause of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement requires first a battle of interpretation and second a way to implement it. He pointed out that the PLO does not deal with the agreement as platitudes taken for granted because various committees are carrying out negotiations on the agreement signed by the two sides on 13 September in Washington.

Nabil Sha'th Comments on Future Arab Economy

NC1710195893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1935 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Oct (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, has stated that the Arabs must work together to build the future Arab economy so that opening the door to Israel after a peace agreement will not harm the Arab economy.

In a statement prior to his departure for Amman this evening on a two-day visit to Jordan, Dr. Sha'th said we do not accept that Israeli military control should be replaced by economic control, and we do not accept for peace to be at the expense of the Arab economy and interests.

Regarding Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar's statement on the futility of Arab coordination following the Palestinian-Israeli bilateral agreements, Dr. Sha'th said coordination is the responsibility of each Arab country alone. Those who do not want to coordinate must bear the responsibility for it. We want coordination and more joint Arab work.

Asked how flexible the Israel side was in the Gaza-Jericho talks, Dr. Sha'th said Israeli flexibility was manifested in organizational matters concerning the agenda. He added that we have not yet dealt with the substance of thJ topics, although we started on this in the committee on the release of detainees. He indicated that flexibility lies not in what the Israelis say but what they do.

Dr. Sha'th said the coming phase will be a real test of Israeli intentions.

'Arafat To Demand UK Repay PLO's Pre-1948 Funds

TA1710193793 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Where is the money, Yasir 'Arafat is going to ask the British. During his upcoming visit to London, the PLO leader plans to demand that the British Government repay his organization the sum of about $1.25 billion. Our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari reports that in separate meetings held over the past few days with a Fatah forum and a delegation of Galilee church clerics, 'Arafat said that the British should reimburse the PLO—with the appropriate interest—for over 20 million pounds sterling in gold which he claims they had retained when their Palestine mandate expired. Our correspondent says that experts in Jerusalem and London were surprised at 'Arafat's plan.

'Arafat further said in these meetings that he plans to issue Palestinians passports as soon as possible and to demand a separate international area code for the territories telephone network.

PLO Seeks Investment From Gulf Countries

NC1710170693 Paris AFP in English 0940 GMT 17 Oct 93

[By Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Oct 17 (AFP)—The PLO has launched a drive to attract Arab investment to build an autonomous Palestinian economy, which it says is an essential step towards the establishment of an independent homeland.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation began measures to open trade offices in the Gulf and other areas and is holding contacts with Arabs to secure long-term economic agreements.

The Israeli-PLO agreement for Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho went into effect on Wednesday [13 October], when detailed negotiations began on implementation.

Sa'ib Bamiyah, an adviser at the PLO's economy department, said a trade office has been set up in the Gulf's main commercial centre of Dubayy and more offices would be set up in other Arab and foreign countries.

"They will cover promoting Palestinian exports and attracting Palestinian, Arab and other investment through providing information on business opportunities in the autonomous Palestinian entity," Bamiyah told AFP in an interview Sunday during a visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

"We are seeking to build a comprehensive, viable and sustainable economic system away from dependency, which has been imposed by the occupation."

The PLO, which signed the autonomy agreement with Israel at the White House on September 13, has said it needs around 11 billion dollars over a period of five years to build the infrastructure and economy after 26 years of Israeli occupation and six years of Palestinian uprising.

But it has secured only two billion dollars, promised at an international conference in Washington last month. The aid will be channelled through the World Bank and other international institutions.

"What has been pledged accounts for less than one fifth of our actual requirements," said Bamiyah, also manager of the PLO's Samid group of companies in the Gulf. "But we are counting on Palestinian and Arab businessmen. We cannot live outside our Arab environment. This is a strategic option."

Bamiyah said the PLO was conducting contacts with Arab states to sign economic agreements to support reconstruction in the West Bank and Gaza.

He said that under the five-year transitional period stipulated by the autonomy accord with Israel, Palestinians would move from a stage of economic dependency with the Jewish state to a stage of economic partnership.

"In the final stage of the transitional period, we will move to a state of economic independence, which forms the nucleus of the independent state," he said. "But this cannot be realised without economic agreements with Arab countries. We have already started contacts in this respect. This is essential for building our independent homeland."

Arab contractors said this week they had already started talks with the PLO to win a share of projects in Gaza and Jericho after their disappointment with Kuwait, which has awarded most rebuilding projects to foreign firms.

The Moroccan-based Arab Contractors Union (ACU) also said it planned to convene its next conference in Jericho to show support for the peace deal, according to ACU deputy chairman Ahmed Balhasa.

Palestinians believe economic recovery is vital for the success of the peace agreement as deteriorating living conditions were among the main factors for the surge of Arab violence in the occupied territories and the emergence of the radical Muslim fundamentalist movement Hamas.

According to bankers, Palestinian foreign assets exceed 20 billion dollars while the Gulf private sector has accumulated more than 160 billion dollars abroad in the absence of major investment opportunities in the Arab world.

"The offices we are opening will make contacts with Arab official and private institutions to seek their help to rebuild our infrastructure. The international role is not enough," Bamiyah said.

"This stage of construction is as significant as the stage of struggle, if not more significant."

Bethlehem Mayor on Meetings With PLO Leadership

JN1610120193 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 Oct 93 pp 28, 22

[By Hamdan al-Hajj]

[Text] Amman—Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj has stressed the importance of maintaining Jordanian-Palestinian fraternity and their close and distinguished bilateral relations, noting that it is in the interest of both parties. He asserted that this is not only his own opinion but also the policy of the Palestinian leadership in the PLO Central Council and the PLO Executive Committee, both of which he met with last week.

In an exclusive statement to AL-DUSTUR, Frayj described the two meetings he held with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat as frank. 'Arafat was optimistic and eager that the march should begin on sound bases, so the whole world will admire and appreciate it. This is because the world is watching the Palestinian experience, which will be judged on the Palestinians' management and success within the framework of sound democracy.

Frayj noted that 'Arafat is a trusted man, that he is fully aware of the events in the occupied territories, and that he has plans and determination to handle the situation and return matters to normal in terms of discipline, order, commitment to duties, and respect for security because the current situation in the occupied territories is tragic.

Frayj noted that he attended the PLO Central Council meetings for the first time, and that he admired the deliberations. He explained that the speeches that were delivered were serious, whether the supported or opposed the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

Frayj pointed out that Israel's acknowledgement that the West Bank and Gaza Strip are occupied territories has committed Israel to implementing Security Council Resolution 242, which dashes the idea of greater Israel. According to the agreement, Israel pledged to dissolve the civil and military administrations in the occupied territories, which is in itself a great achievement. He noted that laying the cornerstone in Jericho will open the way for establishing the aspired Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

Concluding his statement, Frayj said: The committee on the coming Palestinian authority will maintain the PLO. This is the cornerstone because the PLO is the body which Israel recognized before the whole world. The Palestinian authority committee, chaired by 'Arafat himself, is comprised of PLO Executive Committee members and leaders from the territories. The Executive Committee will remain the point of reference for the Palestinian authority committee.

Algeria

FIS Expatriate Leaders Form Executive Committee

NC1510121993 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 11 Oct 93 p 10

[Report by Fayzah Sa'd; names as published]

[Text] Four of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] leaders in Germany—Rabah Kebir, Mohamed Haddam, Kamar Eldine Hazban, and Abdallah Wanis—have formed an Executive Committee for the FIS abroad in coordination with FIS leaders at home.

Kebir, who was appointed head of the committee following his recent release by German authorities, said that the goal of the committee is to unify the FIS forces abroad. The committee intends to form similar committees in other countries, buy weapons, and collect donations from FIS supporters in West Europe.

It is worth noting that Kamar Eldine Hazban was a leader of Arab forces in Afghanistan. He is married to the daughter of Afghan Defense Minister Ahmad Mas'ud. Abdallah Wanis holds U.S. and Algerian passports, currently lives in the United States, and has links with U.S. authorities.

Egypt

Syria's al-Shar' Arrives on 1-Day Visit

Makes Arrival Statement

NC1610120593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 16 Oct (MENA)—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has stated that his current visit to Egypt is part of the constant consultations between Presidents Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad on regional and world developments. He added that he will exchange views with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa on the latest developments, particularly those concerning the peace process.

Speaking to reporters on arriving in Cairo earlier today, al-Shar' affirmed that there are no obstacles hindering the achievement of peace on the Syrian side or on that of the peace conference sponsors. He remarked that the obstacles are on the Israeli side.

During my visit to America last week and my meetings with officials in the U.S. Administration, I sensed no difference in viewpoints between Syria and the United States, he said.

Al-Shar' said that the Syrian side still insists on the basics of a comprehensive, regional peace based on UN Security Council Resolutions 338 and 242, as well as Resolution 425 on Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. If the Israeli side shows the same seriousness and interest, the Syrian side will be prepared to resume the peace negotiations in due time.

Asked whether the time is suitable for holding an Arab meeting to coordinate efforts, Faruq al-Shar' replied that certain things make it difficult to continue in view of developments resulting from the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. He remarked that a certain party did not want to continue coordination. For our part, we will continue the peace process in the same way we started it in Madrid, with the same interest and determination.

I do not believe that coordination copes with developments as it did in the past, he said. He explained that negotiations were and still are being held between the Palestinians and the Israelis without any kind of coordination with the other Arab parties concerned.

Responding to a question on whether Syria believes that the Palestinian-Israeli agreement will affect the regional peace process, al-Shar' said that it is difficult to give a definite answer because there are many possibilities. He remarked that some very negative possibilities might reflect on the Palestinian track and the situation in the region.

Al-Shar' noted, however, that there are also positive possibilities that might put the peace process on the right course. The next few weeks will show which of the two possibilities will prevail.

Meets With Mubarak

NC1610102193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0950 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 16 Oct (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' in the presidential headquarters this morning. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa attended the meeting.

Al-Shar' arrived in Cairo from Damascus this morning on a brief visit to Egypt that will last several hours.

While in Cairo, al-Shar' will hold talks with 'Amr Musa on giving an impetus to the Middle East peace process.

The Syrian minister was received at the airport by Minister 'Amr Musa and Syrian Ambassador in Cairo 'Isa Darwish.

Comments on Mubarak Meeting

NC1610174493 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] At the presidential office today, President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', who arrived in Cairo earlier in the day. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, Egypt's Ambassador in Damascus Mustafa 'Abd-al-'Aziz, and Syria's Ambassador in Cairo 'Isa Darwish attended the meeting.

Al-Shar' said he conveyed to President Mubarak a message from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad as part of the consultations between Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak. He added that during the meeting he reviewed with President Mubarak the region's latest developments, especially the peace process and the outcome of the peace talks so far. Relations between Egypt and Syria also were reviewed, and there was agreement that such contacts and consultations between the two countries should continue. There was agreement with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to continue the talks for the good of both countries and the Arab cause.

Asked whether a date has been set for a new round of peace talks in Washington, al-Shar' said no date has yet been fixed. Replying to another question on Syria's previous announcement that it will not participate in the negotiations if there is no progress on the Syrian-Israeli track, he said: We announced before that we will not go to a poor and futile round of talks and will not hold talks for the sake of holding talks. However, if the Israeli side is serious, Syria is willing to resume any round of talks it might be invited to attend by the cosponsors of the peace process.

Answering a question on how Syria views the U.S. stand on the peace process after U.S. President Bill Clinton's meeting with him in Washington, the Syrian foreign minister said that during his meetings in Washington, both with the U.S. secretary of state, the U.S. President, and other U.S. officials, he sensed seriousness and a commitment to advancing the peace process. He added that the visit of Dennis Ross, the U.S. coordinator for the Middle East peace process, and the U.S. secretary of state's upcoming visit to the region early next month are proof of the U.S. Administration's concern and seriousness in following up the peace process on other tracks, especially the Syrian and Lebanese tracks according to the Madrid formula and the principle of land for peace.

Replying to another question about a report on an expected meeting between Clinton and al-Asad, al-Shar' said this issue was not raised during his visit to Washington and that reports that Syria had requested such a meeting are untrue. He added that all he said during his Washington visit was that a meeting between the U.S. and Syrian presidents would help the peace process, but he did not raise this matter at all during his talks in Washington, either officially or unofficially.

Holds Talks With 'Amr Musa

NC1610170693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1606 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 16 Oct (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held a session of talks with visiting Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al- Shar' today.

Following the meeting, al-Shar' stated that they discussed Arab and regional issues, the international situation, the future of the peace process, and the date on which bilateral peace talks will be resumed in Washington. He expressed satisfaction with the results of his exchange of views with Musa.

Asked when the Washington peace talks will resume, the Syrian foreign minister said that a date will be set in light of the results of the tours that will be carried out by Dennis Ross, the U.S. State Department's coordinator of Middle East peace, and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Ross is expected to arrive in the Middle East in the next few days, and Christopher will visit in early November.

Asked if representatives of the Arab countries concerned with the Middle East peace process will meet to coordinate stances, al-Shar' said it is now too early to discuss the best formula for inter-Arab coordination. He added that one Arab party has departed from this coordination process and is now negotiating with the Israelis without first reaching understanding or coordinating with the other Arabs. He pointed out that for this reason it is not now realistic to speak of inter-Arab coordination as was formerly done before the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

Al-Shar' affirmed that the Palestinian-Israeli agreement has weakened the Arab coordination effort and undermined the united Arab position. He said that we cannot now make a decision on the issue of coordination.

Regarding the meetings of the Damascus Declaration's signatories, Al-Shar' said that, in line with a prior agreement, they will meet in Damascus next December.

Damascus TV Reviews Visit

JN1610201093 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this morning. The meeting was attended by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

In a statement to reporters on arrival in Cairo this morning, al-Shar' said his current visit to Egypt is held within the framework of continuous consultations between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Muhammad Husni Mubarak on regional and international developments. He added the visit also aims to exchange views with 'Amr Musa on the latest developments, particularly concerning the peace process.

Following the meeting, the foreign minister told reporters that within the framework of continuous consultation between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak, the talks with President Mubarak dealt with latest developments in the region, especially the peace process and the results of the peace talks so far.

Al-Shar' added that bilateral relations were discussed. It was agreed to continue these contacts and consultations between the two countries.

He said: I will continue talks with Minister 'Amr Musa that are in the interest of the two countries and the Arab cause.

Answering a question on whether a date was set for a new round of peace talks, the foreign minister replied that no date was set for the new round of peace talks in Washington.

Answering another question on his previous statement that if no progress in peace talks is realized Syria will not participate in them, al-Shar' said: We will not go to an infertile round of talks and will not go to talks just for the sake of having talks.

He added: If there is seriousness on Israel's part, Syria will be ready for talks at the round to which the cosponsors of the peace process may invite Syria.

Answering another question on his meetings with U.S. President Bill Clinton and the U.S. officials, al-Shar' said: I felt seriousness during my meetings in the United States, whether during the meeting with Secretary Christopher or with President Clinton and the other U.S. officials. I felt that there is commitment to advance the peace process.

He added that the visit of Dennis Ross, the U.S. coordinator of the peace talks, and the visit that Christopher will make early next month stand as evidence of the U.S. Administration's concern and seriousness to go ahead with the peace process on the other tracks, especially the Syrian and the Lebanese tracks, on the basis of Madrid's formula and the principle of land for peace.

Later on, a round of talks was held at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry between the Syrian side, led by al-Shar', and the Egyptian side, led by Musa.

Following this round, al-Shar' answered questions posed by journalists saying that different Arab and regional issues were discussed, in addition to the international situation, the peace process, the future of the peace process, and when the bilateral peace talks will resume in Washington.

Answering a question on the date for the resumption of the new round of peace talks, the foreign minister said: I believe that in light of the tour to the region that Dennis Ross will make within the next few days and in light of the tour that Secretary Christopher will make to the region early next month—as far as we know—the date of the new round can be decided.

Answering another question on what he said upon arrival in Cairo today about the futility of continuing coordination between the cordon states and whether he suggests suspending the coordination meetings altogether or continuing the meetings without the participation of the Palestinian side, the foreign minister emphasized that it is premature to speak about the next formula for coordination between the Arab parties to the peace process.

He added: As you know, there is an Arab party that deviated from coordination. This party holds negotiations with the Israeli side on dates that have not been coordinated within the Arab framework. So it has become unrealistic to speak about coordination between the Arab parties to the peace process as was the case before the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

On the call made by Saudi monarch King Fahd for formation of a defense council for the Gulf states assigned with Gulf security, and whether this means the end of the Damascus Declaration, the foreign minister said: It is natural for the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] to coordinate together. The Damascus Declaration, which groups Syria, Egypt, and the GCC states is there, and it contains a host of articles to which all are committed, and these states meet within their framework and take what action they deem appropriate as implementation measures.

Al-Shar' said a meeting of the declaration states may be held in Damascus next December, as it was agreed on during the last meeting.

Al-Shar' arrived in Cairo this morning on a short visit to Egypt for talks with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa. He was received at the Cairo International Airport by Musa and Syrian Ambassador to Egypt Dr. 'Isa Darwish; Egypt's Ambassador to Syria Dr. Mustafa 'Abd-al-Aziz Mursi; ranking Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials; and the staff of the Syrian Embassy in Cairo. The foreign minister replied to reporters' questions.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned to Damascus tonight following a short visit to Cairo during which he was received by Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and held talks witP Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

He was seen off at the airport by 'Amr Musa, the Syrian ambassador in Cairo, the Egyptian ambassador to Syria, ranking Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials, and the Syrian Embassy staff.

Musa on Mubarak's Impending U.S. Visit

NC1510152193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1210 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 15 Oct (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa underlined the importance of President Husni Mubarak's visit to the United States next week. In a statement today, Musa said that President Mubarak's visit is of particular importance because of the distinguished relations between Egypt and the United States and the important roles the two countries play in a number of issues, such as the Middle East peace process, the situation in Somalia, and the flash points in Africa, such as Liberia and Angola.

Musa pointed out that the African file will be high on the agenda of the upcoming Egyptian-U.S. summit, because Egypt is the current chairman of the OAU. He noted that relations between the two countries will also be discussed.

The foreign minister added that after President Mubarak visits the United States, he will visit Paris, where he will address UNESCO and meet with French President Francois Mitterrand and Prime Minister Edouard Balladur. Musa pointed out that President Mubarak's talks with the French officials will deal with the peace process, the European contribution to regional economic development, bilateral relations, and the situation in Africa. The foreign minister praised the close ties between Egypt and France.

Al-Baz on U.S. Visit

NC1710174093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1622 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Oct (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director for political affairs of the president's office, has said that President Husni Mubarak's upcoming visits to the United States and France assume special importance because of their timing and the topics he will discuss. In a statement today, al-Baz said that the peace process has gone a long way in the past few months, and it is facing certain challenges. It is important, he said, that President Mubarak discuss these topics directly with U.S. President Bill Clinton and French President Francois Mitterrand.

Al-Baz said that the peace process, the situation in the Gulf, economic development in general, and its relationship to the problem of African debts will be the most important issues that President Mubarak will broach in his capacity as OAU chairman. He will also discuss the Somali issue and an appropriate way out of the tense situation there, and the issue of South Africa.

Dr. al-Baz pointed out that views will be exchanged on international issues and bilateral ties between Egypt and the United States and France, noting the importance of continuing contacts to maintain this level of good ties between Egypt and these countries. Regarding the economic aspect, al-Baz said that it is important that Europe and the United States continue to show understanding of the requirements of economic reforms and to boost exports of Egyptian commodities, particularly industrial products.

On the outcome of the continuing talks between Egypt and Syria and the possibility of making progress on the Syrian-Israeli track, al-Baz said that there is nothing to indicate tangible progress on the Syrian-Israeli track. He voiced his hope that progress will be made on this track in the future. He called on Israel to respond to Syria's desire for progress and to give up its stagnant stand on the pretext that it is not possible to move along two tracks at the same time.

Assessing the work of the liaison committee and the Gaza-Jericho committee that met in Cairo and Taba last week, al-Baz said that what we heard from both the Palestinian and Israeli parties indicate that the two committees are proceeding on the right course.

Chief of Staff Leaves for U.S. Visit

NC1710113893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0914 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Oct (MENA)—Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Salah Halabi left for the United States this morning at the head of a high-level delegation. Lt. Gen. Halabi will hold military talks with officials on cooperation in the field of armaments and training.

During the visit, which will last until 27 October, the Egyptian delegation will meet with John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Senator Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate's Armed Services Committee.

Musa: Somali Decisions Must Be Implemented

NC1710164593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that Egypt's goal with regard to Somalia is to achieve national reconciliation and stability. Reconciliation, he added, must be achieved among all Somali factions and not in the interest of just one faction with respect for the Security Council and the resolutions of international legitimacy.

He noted that Egypt does not demand the convocation of a new conference for Somali national reconciliation, but the implementation of previous reconciliation resolutions and securing a favorable climate for implementing these resolutions.

He pointed out that indications of reconciliation have emerged, but there are circumstances that might block it. He stressed the importance of achieving reconciliation to everyone's interests, not just the interests of one faction, and he said that all Somali factions should be dealt with, not with personalities. He said the Somalia issue will top President Husni Mubarak's talks in Washington.

Editorial Urges Egyptian, OAU Help in Somalia

NC1610105493 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 9 Oct 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Golden Opportunity"]

[Text] We hope that the United States has begun to follow the right course in resolving the Somali crisis, particularly following yesterday's statements by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Secretary of Defense Les Aspin. Christopher said that the United States will ask the OAU, Egypt in particular, to play an effective role in finding an African political solution to the Somali crisis. Christopher noted that Washington is maintaining close contact with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali, who will visit Somalia and Ethiopia next week to resume reconciliation efforts there.

U.S. Defense Secretary Les Aspin said that Washington wishes to establish an interim national council in Somalia made up of representatives from all factions and clans, including General Aidid. This statement is similar to an earlier announcement by U.S. President Bill Clinton. Aspin added: What we are trying to do now is urge African leaders to promote a process of national reconciliation. News agencies regarded Aspin's and Christopher's statements, coming in the wake of similar remarks by President Clinton, as signifying a change in U.S. policy on the crisis.

This change is more conspicuous since President Clinton's administration had focused its efforts since last June on arresting General Aidid on various charges, including responsibility for the death of Pakistani and U.S. troops operating under the auspices of the United Nations, which supposedly has been carrying out a peace mission there since late 1992.

The U.S. failure to capture Aidid and the growing number of U.S. dead, wounded, and captured troops has forced the United States to change its tactics, especially after the specter of a new Vietnam loomed and news agencies began speaking of a confrontation on Somali territory between Iranian fundamentalists and Somali extremists on one side and the United States on the other.

It is clear that the United States is seeking an honorable way out of the Somali quandary. However, the recent dispatch of U.S. troop reinforcements to Somalia raises the fear that the United States might resort to a greater level of violence, either to avenge the death of its servicemen or to reassert its prestige. We must be wary of such a development because it can only mean further tension and bloodshed.

Our assessment is that the way out for the United States—and it is clear that the U.S. leadership is actually seeking a way out—can only come through a political, not a military, solution. This means that the United States, with UN and OAU assistance, must work rapidly over the next few weeks or months to establish an interim national authority in Somalia to whom the country's affairs would be turned over along the lines of the Cambodian model, where an appropriate climate was created to hold parliamentary elections, after which the winners would take over authority from the interim council.

We also believe that this is a golden opportunity for Egypt, the OAU, and the Arab League to cooperate in seeking a Cambodia-like solution in Somalia, or something close to it. This would allow the United States and the United Nations to save face, prove Arab and African capability to cooperate in solving the continent's problems, and preserve the Somali people's independence and territorial integrity.

Mubarak, Jordan's Husayn Hold Phone Discussion

NC1710171393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1624 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Oct (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received a telephone call from King Husayn of Jordan this afternoon. They exchanged views on the Arab parties' position on the developments in the peace process in the Middle East.

Palestinian Police Training in Egypt

NC1610115293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1105 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 16 Oct (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stated that the first group of Palestinians are currently being trained in Egypt in security and public order functions. He noted that all the Palestinians who will keep order in Gaza and Jericho will be trained in Egypt in the near future. At a news conference today, he said that the first group of Palestinians who are currently being trained at the Police Officers' Training Institute, the police training centers, and police posts include 50 officers, 130 administrative men, and hundreds of individuals. He underlined that all police training institutes in Egypt will open their doors to train the Palestinian brothers out of Egypt's concern and total support for the Palestinian issue.

Musa on Arab-Israeli Peace Process

NC1710162793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1313 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Oct (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that Egypt is now passing through a stage where everyone is required to serve the national goals and pursue Egypt's interests and that work should be devoted to these objectives.

Musa was speaking today at a meeting with the trade counselors who have been transferred to work with Egyptian diplomatic and consular missions abroad.

Referring to the close association between diplomatic activity and trade representation, he said both are working to serve pan-Arab causes.

He reviewed Egypt's positions on regional and world issues, foremost of which is the cause of peace, and he reviewed expected political and economic developments in the region.

The foreign minister emphasized that cooperation among the region's countries requires the establishment of a just and durable peace on all tracks in the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Noting President Mubarak's directives to the new cabinet, the foreign minister said Egypt's primary diplomatic goal in the next stage is to attract international investments and activate economic ties with countries around the world with emphasis on the private sector's role in this regard.

Al-Baz on Syrian Goals With Israel

TA1610194493 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Interview with Dr. Usamah al-Baz, political adviser to President Husni Mubarak, by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik; in Cairo, place not given—recorded in English with Hebrew subtitles]

[Text] [Sukenik] Dr. al-Baz, are we close to an agreement, even an initial Israel-Syria agreement?

[Al-Baz] We hope so. There isn't any concrete information to warrant this conclusion at the time being, but we hope that you can achieve meaningful and significant progress with Syria without delay, because Syria is a very important Arab country and its role in the peace process is a central one. It would be a mistake to say that you cannot move on both tracks at the same time, or that you have to digest the agreement with the Palestinians first before you move with the Syrians because the whole idea was that you have accepted and you committed yourselves to accepting the concept of a comprehensive peace. We believe that the Syrians are ready to give and take, and they have made it clear that they accept the concept of total peace for full withdrawal. We see no obstacles.

[Sukenik] Could you set a timetable for an Israeli-Syrian agreement, because you know that President Mubarak said just a few days ago that it might be during this year?

[Al-Baz] You can achieve a lot of progress this year on the Syrian front, with the hope of signing the agreement, let us say—at least the declaration of principles—sometime in the early spring next year.

[Sukenik] From the talks that you have with the Israelis quite often, will Israel in your opinion withdraw from all of the Golan Heights for full peace?

[Al-Baz] Well, no Israeli high-ranking official has made this kind of commitment in a clear-cut manner. They have always maintained that they cannot make any concession ahead of the game and that this will come as a result of the give and take. And we understand that because we have gone through the process of negotiation, and we know what it involves. But we believe, without hearing it directly and openly from any Israeli official, that not only the Israeli Government but the Israeli general public will reconcile itself to living in peace with Syria on the basis of exchanging land for peace. And, since Israel doesn't have any territorial claims in Syria, there are no historic, or religious, or cultural claims in the Golan Heights, then it becomes only a matter of security, and this can be arranged through security arrangements. And we urge each and every Israeli citizen to take this courageous step without thinking that he or his country will be taking a risk. There is not involved a risk here, because if the Syrians accept wholeheartedly and irrevocably to live in peace with Israel, that will be a big achievement and this is much more important than stationing some forces over the Golan or keeping some settlers over there. The most important thing is mutual acceptance and the free willingness to coexist in the present and in the future.

[Sukenik] But what makes you so sure, so convinced that the agreement is closer, that the Syrians are willing to full peace with Israel, because we didn't hear it, we didn't hear them say full normalization, open borders, embassies?

[Al-Baz] Let me put it this way: You have to differentiate between the term full peace and the question of normalization, because normalization was overused and often abused by some people and it has been distorted. For that purpose, I would say that we should concentrate on using the term full peace, open borders, relations, relations of peace, cooperation, friendship, good neighborliness, and so on.

[Sukenik] Did they tell you or the president that they are willing to do all those things?

[Al-Baz] This is our understanding from our talks with them. They wouldn't make a commitment because, like you, they wouldn't like to make a commitment ahead of time and they wouldn't like to make it without a quid pro quo. They keep it to sit down and to exchange it with the Israeli delegation. However, it is our clear understanding that Syria will accept the concept of full peace without any reservations.

Greece Impounds Ship Carrying Military Equipment

NC1610193293 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry has commented on press reports today that the Greek authorities have impounded the Syrian-flagged ship "Ayda-K" and its Syrian crew members—which had anchored at Crete because of a mechanical problem—on the pretext that there is discrepancy between its cargo and bill of lading.

The ship is carrying military equipment and armored vehicles as a gift from Egypt to Mali via the Port of Dakar in Senegal. Contacts are under way between the Egyptian and Malian Governments on one hand and the Greek Government on the other for the immediate release of the ship.

Mubarak Addresses New Cabinet's First Meeting

NC1410172293 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1514 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Statement by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif after the new cabinet took the constitutional oath and held its first meeting under President Husni Mubarak in Cairo on 14 October—recorded]

[Text] During his meeting with the new cabinet, President Mubarak reaffirmed, as he had said in his speech at the People's Assembly, that the coming stage will be for surging forward to place Egypt on the threshold of the 21st century as a strong, secure, and stable state enjoying a strong economy, complete democracy, and a prominent international position. President Mubarak dealt with the process of national action in Egypt on the political, economic, and social levels. He noted that Egypt has peacefully moved from the stage of having a one-party system to a democratic multiparty system. He noted that Egypt has made great strides toward a free market economy through concrete and gradual economic reforms. President Mubarak added that reforms, whether political or economic, were designed to achieve a better life for the Egyptian people and future generations, while respecting all opinions and the freedom of the press and information.

President Mubarak said that this government is being asked to make general improvements in performance through a new program which the president will outline in the People's Assembly at the opening of the new parliamentary session.

President Mubarak outlined several values and principles that should be adhered to in the administration of ministerial work: First, that ministerial responsibility is collective. It is natural for different opinions to exist and for discussions and debates to take place inside the cabinet. But when a decision is made by the majority of cabinet members, that decision should become binding. Second, that the ministerial decisions should be made quickly following a thorough study. The decisions should serve the public interest, support what is right, and be free of any suspicion.

It is important to follow up on the implementation of decisions. It is not sufficient to issue decisions without following up the mechanisms of their implementation to make sure that the decisions achieve their purpose.

A ministerial decision should take into consideration the social dimension and support the interests of the weak. The decision must serve the interest of the citizen and the toiling classes.

Corruption, negligence, and indiscipline should be combated.

The cabinet should work in solidarity and in a team spirit. This would be consistent with the spirit of solidarity which we are seeking to spread in society.

The president emphasized the importance of being frank and giving the facts to the people, stressing that the truth is the best way to convince people. He said that we must always be ready to accept criticism, correct what is negative, and clarify the facts when addressing the people.

The president emphasized the importance of respecting the Constitution and the law and respecting court rulings. This is in addition to respecting the freedom of the press and information, and emphasizing the concept of rights and duties in society. The president also noted the need to give chances to the youths in all employment places.

President Mubarak also emphasized a number of priorities in the work of the new government. The first of these is safeguarding Egypt's stability and the security of its people. He asserted that stability is the basis for any political, democratic, and social progress and achievement. The second is ending terrorism, which affects the security of the country and its people and destroys the livelihood of the people. The government is asked to respond to the collective demand of the people to launch a comprehensive campaign to frustrate the terrorist designs. All the state institutions should play their role in this respect.

The president said that the cabinet should pursue serious and constant work that is based on economic progress and reforms already achieved in order to complete the reforms process, in view of the fact that the economy is the mainstay of life. This work will continue until the Egyptian economy is liberated and the prospects and doors for Egyptian, Arab, and foreign investments are opened in order to raise the standards of living and provide for the homeland's needs by raising the rate of development, creating job opportunities, confronting the unemployment problem, and spreading the social security umbrella.

The cabinet, the president went on to say, should pay attention to the development of the education plan, from the viewpoint that this is Egypt's national plan until the year 2000.

It should also raise the standards of all forms of services, foremost of which are health, social affairs, transportation, communications, and social security services.

It should take radical measures to handle the problem of the slums across the whole country and develop all these areas and their utilities.

It also must develop the population plan at the republic level according to the comprehensive concept of the population issue by virtue of the fact that this is the most important and gravest issue until the beginning of the new century. This has to be done within the context of raising the level of population [word indistinct], in addition to family planning and population distribution. This requires the full cooperation of all the establishments responsible for this issue.

The cabinet must complete Egypt's tourism plan and raise the standard of tourism advertising in order to restore tourism in Egypt to normal. It also must improve the tourism sector's efficiency, services, and marketing. This includes a study of the Tourism Ministry's offices.

The president added that the government has to pay attention to the environment and related issues and must complete the projects to protect the environment and the necessary programs to create awareness of the environment.

The cabinet must complete the new urban centers projects and finish their infrastructure so that they will not turn into an inoperative investment. It has to tighten control of their performances while promoting the concept of these urban centers.

It has to complete the five-year development projects according to their priorities while giving housing and utilities special attention, especially with regard to completing the water and open sewage systems at the republic level.

President Mubarak made some observations to the ministers who have assumed new responsibilities. In the industrial field, the president noted the Industry Ministry's role in light of the existence of the public sector and the expansion of the private sector, adding that this ministry's role has become important in the development, modernization, and control of Egyptian products.

In the scientific research field, the president referred to its role in developing life on Egypt's soil and to the scientific research centers' role in developing the elements of comprehensive development. The president said that the next century requires investment in our technological resources by opening up to scientific research centers in the advanced countries. In a way, that is compatible with the development and life on our land. The president also underlined the importance of cooperation between Egypt's brains with world scientific research centers and scientists, regardless of their nationalities and their countries, so that we can have knowledge about the most up-to-date research, which can play a major role in developing Egyptian performance.

The president then dealt with the philosophy of privatization, noting that this is being done while maintaining the major industrial and productive edifices and also maintaining [word indistinct] establishments that represent a history and heritage that must be preserved.

The president also said that we have to follow up and assess the economic reform processes in the countries that have succeeded in this field so that we can avoid the negative and fatal mistakes made by other countries.

The president noted that the national dialogue completes the national action process and added that this will help formulate the priorities of action and will serve Egypt's supreme interests rather than narrow-based interests. The president said: I always stress that Egypt is above the parties and that Egypt is always above everyone.

President Mubarak also thanked the outgoing ministers. He said: Each of them exerted great and constant efforts in his post for many years, and together we faced difficult and crucial times. I salute all of them. They are dear colleagues and brothers in a long national action process during which they confronted the difficulties and obstacles seriously and selflessly. The change is part of nature and not a denigration of them.

2 Policemen, 1 Gunman Killed in Cairo Clash

NC1710144893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1339 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Oct (MENA)—Two police officers were killed in al-Marj district of Cairo today when drug traffickers opened fire on them during an intense campaign by the security agencies against the hideouts of drug traffickers in the area.

During an exchange of fire between police forces and the criminals, Major Haytham Ibrahim and First Lieutenant Nabil Ibrahim of the Central Security forces were martyred, one of the criminals was killed and another was wounded.

Some automatic weapons and bullets were seized and the security agencies arrested a number of suspects in the area.

[Paris AFP in English at 1319 GMT on 17 October carries the following report on this incident:

["Cairo, Oct 17 (AFP)—Two policemen and a Moslem fundamentalist were killed in a shoot-out here Sunday, police said.

["The clash happened when police went to the densely-populated Matariya district in northern Cairo to arrest a suspected drug trafficker at his home and were fired on by four fundamentalists hiding in a neighbouring house, police said.

["Two policemen were killed and the others fired back, killing one fundamentalist and wounding another. The other two were arrested.

["The killings brought to 63 the number of policemen killed since fundamentalists stepped up their campaign to overthrow President Husni Mubarak's secular government in March 1992.

["Meanwhile, the military prosecutor for eastern Cairo, who was wounded in a fundamentalist attack on October 9, was flown on Saturday to the United States where he is to receive medical treatment, Egyptian newspapers said.

["Lieutenant Colonel Taha al-Sayyid Taha suffered bullet wounds to the abdomen, shoulder and arm, and although his condition was not critical, he will receive further medical treatment in the United States, they said.

["The reports gave no details on where he would be hospitalized.

["Taha, who had been presiding at a trial of fundamentalists, was attacked as he left his home in Cairo."]

In cooperation with the Antinarcotics General Administration, the security agencies mounted a campaign on the al-Marj area today after receiving preliminary information that some major drug traffickers and terrorists were hiding in the area.

The campaign officers reconnoitered the area to arrest the drug traffickers, but some extremists hiding in that area opened fire on the police forces, which returned fire.

Two officers were killed and two soldiers from Central Security received various injuries and were immediately taken to Heliopolis Hospital for treatment.

A terrorist also was killed and another was wounded and taken to hospital for treatment under custody. He will be questioned when his health permits.

Source on Campaign on 'Terrorists'

NC1710192593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1726 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Oct (MENA)—A responsible source at the Interior Ministry has stated that at approximately 0730 today, Sunday, 17 October, a force from the Antinarcotics General Administration, supported by a Central Security force, implemented a Drugs Prosecution warrant to search the home of suspect Sayyid Mursi (?Sayyid), known as 'Antar. As the forces got out of their cars about 100 meters from the suspect's home, they were surprised by a hail of gunfire against them.

The random fire directed against the forces killed Major Haytham Ibrahim Abu-al-'Aynayn and First Lieutenant Nabil Ibrahim Ahmad of the Special Operations Unit and wounded conscripts Sayyid Mansur 'Imran (?and) Muhammad 'Atiyyah 'Abd-al-Fattah of the Central Security Operations Unit.

The forces immediately dealt with the source of fire by directing intense fire at it, which resulted in the injury of Walid Muhammad Tawfiq with a bullet wound in the abdomen. He died in the hospital.

The bullet-riddled body of an unidentified man was found, and efforts are under way to identify the body by comparing its fingerprints with those listed at the (?detective) agencies. [Words indistinct] that they are leading terrorists of al-Shawqiyyun suspected in the armed robbery of al-Muruwwah Jewelry shops in al-Matariyah and in the murder of a survey engineer in al-Fayyum.

The forces arrested a man named Ahmad 'Abd-al-Halim 'Abd-al-Majid Tarfayah, born on 19 June 1972, native of Mishrif Village in Markaz (Atsa), al-Fayyum. He is a prominent terrorist in al-Shawqiyyun Organization and a suspect in the same cases.

The police took control of the scene of the incident and searched the house of the terrorists, where they found five hand grenades and a quantity of cartridges. Firemen brought under control a fire that broke out in the house and in nearby homes, which were caught fire as a result of the (?exchange of gunfire).

At the same time, another force continued to pursue drug trafficker Sayyid Mursi Sayyid and arrested him. On searching his home, the forces found a quantity of opium and heroin. They also found him in possession of an unlicensed pistol and some bullets.

The (?Detective) Agency, Cairo Security Directorate, and criminal laboratory officials went immediately to examine the scene of the incident and the prosecution was asked to begin an investigation.

Al-Alfi on Terrorism, Human Rights Violations

NC1610163493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1356 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 16 Oct (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has affirmed that the security apparatuses will continue their efforts to uproot terrorism and strike at the hideouts of terrorists and those who encourage or harbor them.

At a news conference he held today, the interior minister emphasized that there is an all out confrontation between the police and the outlawed terrorist elements. He said these elements take religion as a facade while in effect they are not Muslims, but rather a bunch of murderers. He said the security organs will stand up to them very firmly and powerfully.

The interior minister disclosed that the security organs have caught a group of terrorists who were involved in planning and carrying out the frustrated assassination attempt against him last August.

He said the group received financing from abroad to carry out terrorist operations in Egypt. He refused, however, to name the states involved. He added that the full details of this operation will be publicized once the interrogation of the apprehended terrorist is concluded.

The news conference was held in the Interior Ministry and was attended by a large number of Arab and foreign newspapers and news agency correspondents. At the beginning of the conference, al-Alfi welcomed reports by citizens about terrorist and law-breaking incidents, affirming that the police stations are open to citizens of all affiliations.

Al-Alfi said that a high-level committee is currently conducting a study on security systems in various parts of the world to select the systems best suited for use in Egypt. He remarked that the goal is to provide excellent service to each citizen at any time and according to his circumstances.

Minister al-Alfi underlined the importance of building relations between the police and the people based on mutual respect in order to provide the best services. He stressed that public support for the police is essential for maintaining order and preventing crime.

He commented on the Interior Ministry's plan to confront terrorism and whether this plan is adequate or whether there is a new and more stringent security policy. He said that decisiveness and firmness are the police's policy for applying the law, noting that the law encompasses measures capable of confronting terrorists and that the police agencies adhere to the rule of law.

He stressed that the initiative in tackling terrorism is in the hands of the police not of the terrorists. He said: We will never rest until terrorism is eliminated by chasing and arresting the terrorists everywhere in Egypt, until terrorism is uprooted so that the state can pursue a comprehensive development process and so that stability and security can prevail through the citizens' help to police agencies.

Asked of the likelihood of conducting a dialogue with terrorists, he inquired: With whom should we hold a dialogue? Do we conduct a dialogue with outlawed criminals and murderers? He reiterated that we reject having a dialogue with these elements, and anyone who violates the law must be eliminated.

The interior minister said a dialogue should be held with the youths who have not been involved in any acts in breach of security or with the youths who are being exploited through corrupt and misleading teachings. He also called for a dialogue with youths in universities, schools, and clubs to reveal the corrupt ideas of those terrorists who have nothing to do with religion and who destroy Islam. He refused to call these terrorists "Islamic groups" and said it is wrong to give them such a title because they are a bunch of atheists, criminals, and murderers who seek power, want to pursue their personal interests, destroy the economy, and create some kind of instability to achieve their mean goals. He noted that the terrorists who have been arrested have admitted this in detail.

He explained that the text of the Holy Koran is explicit and noted that the current security measures aim to protect Islam and Muslims against that perverted faction.

The interior minister said terrorism is not a domestic but an international phenomenon and expressed hope for comprehensive international agreements among all world countries to combat this phenomenon to achieve peace and world-wide comprehensive development.

He stressed the need for a full "agreement" in dealing with terrorism through continuous training and the use of the most modern scientific equipment. He called for the need for full cooperation between police agencies and international institutions to combat drugs and deal with international drug gangs. These, he noted, are international crimes and all the countries of the world must be united against them under the UN umbrella.

He called for cooperation between the police agencies and the citizens to deal with any corruption, including bribery, violence, and influence-peddling, and asserted that no one is above the law no matter what. He urged the public to pass to the security authorities any information about deviations or corruption, provided there are specific (?incidents) and supportive documents, not merely malicious reports.

He pointed out that the economic, political, and social security agencies are pursuing efforts to reveal any deviations and all other crimes, particularly combating corruption. On the discipline on the Egyptian streets, he emphasized the need to respect the state's cultural image regarding transportation and other facilities.

The interior minister was asked about reports on human rights violations inside Egyptian jails and torture [words indistinct] random arrest [words indistinct]. He said that there is no torture inside Egyptian jails and that human rights reports in this respect are fabricated and groundless. He said that some people's talk about random arrests [words indistinct] of this deviant faction of evil people [words indistinct], noting that such incidents should be supported by names not merely by general talk.

He also affirmed that there are no violations of human rights and that, on the contrary, policemen and citizens are being assaulted, and he asked where the rights of these people were. Regarding (?acts of torture), he said the injuries of some prisoners are self-inflicted, because they are professional criminals and [words indistinct] some police officers.

Replying to a question on the number of the current detainees in Egyptian jails, the interior minister refused to reveal the number. He said no one is arrested haphazardly and that those suspected of committing crimes and terrorist acts are arrested according to the law. He said there are legal guarantees and procedures that are used in this regard.

On the measures that the Interior Ministry has taken to secure Egypt's western and southern borders, he affirmed that there is firm control over these border crossing points in order to detect forged travel documents, which terrorists use. Modern techniques are also used to discover wanted and convicted people to prevent them from leaving or entering and this takes place [words indistinct] with ports and airports.

Answering a question on the conditions inside Egyptian prisons, he said there is a firm policy on the application of prison rules and regulations and on the need to respect them in order to prevent disorder and excesses. He asserted that complete discipline now prevails in Egyptian jails. He noted that the Interior Ministry's plan in the upcoming phase includes the setting up of new prisons in accordance with world standards because some prisons are old.

Replying to a question on the (?funding) of Interior Ministry agencies and resources to deal with terrorism and the new security measures, he said the ministry has enough for its needs and enough for the next stage.

On whether there is cooperation among Arab countries to tackle terrorism and crime, he said there is complete cooperation and continuous bilateral contacts to coordinate the efforts to combat terrorism, not only in our region but also in other countries. The interior minister added that a conference of Arab interior ministers will be held soon to discuss means of dealing with all forms of terrorism.

Journalists Released After Interrogation

NC1410220893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1956 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] Cairo, 14 Oct (MENA)—The Higher State Security Prosecutor's Office decided this evening to release three journalists from the opposition newspaper AL-SHA'B. They are former chief editor 'Adil Husayn, 'Ali al-Qammash, and Salah Budaywi.

Earlier today, state prosecutors continued interrogating them on charges of spreading extremist ideas through their writings in the newspaper. They were asked about their press coverage of several seminars in Asyut organized by the members of Asyut University's faculty club, which advocated a terrorist ideology. Labor Party Leader Ibrahim Shukri and several Asyut University professors addressed the seminar.

Shukri told investigators that he had nothing to do with the press coverage of these seminars, which is the job of the newspaper's editors.

The three journalists denied any connection with the press coverage of the seminars in question and denied any connection with the interview that AL-SHA'B conducted with 'Abbud al-Zumur, a political prisoner.

They also denied connection with an interview which the newspaper conducted with Ahmad 'Abduh Salim, leader of the Islamic Group in Asyut. They pointed out that both al-Zumur and Salim denied giving such interviews to AL-SHA'B and said other colleagues had conducted those interviews.

Morocco

Parties Announce Names of New Chairmen

LD1410173393 Rabat MAP in English 1254 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] Rabat, Oct. 14 (MAP)—The Istiqlal Party's parliamentary group, dubbed "the Group for Unity and Egalitarism", named Mohamed El-Khalifa as its chairman.

The decision was made last Monday during a meeting of the group. El-Khalifa ensured the group chairmanship during the previous legislature.

The Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) and the Party for Progress and Socialism (PPS) have also named the chairmen of their respective groups in the person namely of Fathallah Oualalou for the USFP and Ismail Alaoui for the PPS.

Mohamed Asmoudi was appointed chairman of the Constitutional Union (UC), said [words indistinct] of the Popular Movement (MP), Aziz Hocine of the National Rally of Independents, Khala Essaidi of the National Popular Movement (MNP), Lamine Benaceur of the National Democratic Party (PND).

Diplomatic Ties Established With Uzbekistan

LD1610142893 Rabat MAP in English 1327 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Rabat, Oct.16 (MAP)—Moroccan ambassador in Moscow, Abdessalam Znined, and his peer Yusuf Abdullayev, ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan, have signed in the Russian capital on October 11, a joint communique on the establishment of diplomatic relations between Morocco and Uzbekistan.

Loans Granted for Private Sector Investments

LD1410165993 Rabat MAP in English 1241 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] Rabat, Oct. 14 (MAP)—The International Finance Corporation (IFC) will grant in 1994 a USD [$]70 million loan to Moroccan leasing companies and a USD 220 million to the banking sector to finance private sector investments, said Moroccan Finance Minister Mohamed Berrada.

Berrada who was addressing the weekly cabinet meeting Wednesday said the IFC is willing to participate in other Moroccan projects, namely in the project related to electric power independent generating and in the one pertaining to the creation of a rediscount company to dynamize the monetary and financial market in collaboration with European partners.

Berrada also said that negotiations between Morocco and the World Bank on the granting of USD 100 million to the Moroccan Agricultural Credit Bank "La Caisse Nationale de Credit Agricole" (CNCA) have reached the final phase.

This amount along with fundings by other donors will enable the CNCA to mobilize huge resources, Berrada said.

Sudan

Revolutionary Command Council Disbands 16 Oct

NC1610143093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Oct (MENA)—The Sudanese Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation has decided to disband itself as of today and to ask Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir to assume the post of president of the republic.

The decision was adopted following a proposal submitted by Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Saiih, deputy chairman of the council and deputy prime minister.

All the council members approved the decision at a meeting at which a number of members spoke, stressing their support for al-Bashir's leadership.

Major General Salih explained that it was necessary to take a courageous step by drawing up a state structure for Sudan similar to that in surrounding countries.

At its meeting, which is the last to be held, the Commmand Council issued a constitutional decree which explains the guiding principles of the state's policy. The decree stresses that Islam is the binding shari'ah and is the guide of the state's laws, systems, and policies. There is no coercion in religion and no monopoly on worship.

On national unity, the decree states that the homeland is united by the spirit of loyalty and by national authority and wealth. As for the system of government, the decree states that it is based on freedom and shura [consultation] without allowing political sectarianism or party fanaticism.

The decree states that the judiciary is an independent body run by a supreme council.

Concerning the post of the president of the republic, the new system states that the president of the republic is appointed by a constitutional decree. Afterward, free elections will be held to elect a president according to regulations and for the periods specified in the decree.

The decree states that the president of the republic is the head of state and enjoys the same jurisdiction and powers as the Command Council except for the power to issue of republican decrees, to declare war, to declare a state of emergency, and to abolish the state legislature.

The president can appoint one or two vice presidents. The president can delegate authority to his vice president. The first vice president enjoys the same powers and jurisdiction as the president during the latter's absence.

Al-Bashir Declared President

EA1610153093 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you all. The Revolutionary Command Council [RCC] of the National Salvation Revolution this morning held a historic session under the chairmanship of Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the chairman of the council.

During the meeting the seventh constitutional decree of 1993 was proclaimed. Lt. Gen. 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir was charged with assuming the position of president of the republic. This was done after all the members of the RCC of the National Salvation Revolution resolved voluntarily to dissolve the council, from today, on the basis of a proposal tabled by Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, deputy chairman of the RCC.

Several members of the RCC spoke during the session and confirmed their stand behind the leadership of Lt. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir, as he leads the Sudanese nation in the coming stage in the life of the glorious revolution, God willing.

Al-Bashir Sworn In

EA1610185693 Khartoum SUNA in English 1655 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Excerpts] Khartoum, 16 Oct (SUNA)—The Salvation Revolution Command Council, RCC, approved in a historic session on Saturday [16 October] three constitutional decrees including dissolution of itself. [passage omitted] Decree Number Eight stipulated appointment of General 'Umar al-Bashir as president of Sudan.

The Decree Number Nine affirmed the validity of the constitutional decrees issued by the former RCC unless they have been cancelled by a decision by the president of the republic.

The decree gave TNA [Transitional National Assembly] powers of RCC in the state of war declaration and emergency as well as cancellation of states legislations.

It is to be noted that Gen. al-Bashir was sworn in before chief justice as president of Sudan here Saturday.

Decree on Naming Vice Presidents

EA1610195893 Khartoum SUNA in English 1620 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Oct (SUNA)—The Revolution Command Council, RCC, held here Saturday [16 October] a historic meeting and issued a decree dissolving itself.

The decree stipulated assignment of General 'Umar al-Bashir as president of the Republic of Sudan.

The Decree No. Seven for the year 1993 came in compliance with a proposal by Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, deputy chairman of the former RCC. According to the decree, Gen. Bashir has powers of appointing two vice-presidents and senior officials.

Constitutional Decree Abolishes RCC

EA1710120693 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Constitutional Decree No. 7: In the name of God and in the name of the people and the Armed Forces. In conformity with the provisions of Constitutional Decree No. 1 of 1989, the Revolution Command Council [RCC] of the National Salvation Revolution [NSR] has issued the constitutional decree whose text follows:

The name of the decree and its validity. This decree will be named Constitutional Decree No. 7: Principles, Regulations, and Constitutional Developments for the Year 1993. It comes into force with effect from its signing.

Chapter I: The Principles Guiding the Policy of the Government

Religion is one: Islam is the religion guiding the overwhelming mass of society. It renews itself and transcends apathy and unites and transcends denominationalism. It is the law that inspires and guides the government's laws, regulations, and policies. But the religion of the book or the Christian religion or traditional religion are free choices for all. There is no compulsion in faith. There is no monopoly of worship. It will be fostered by the state and its organs.

National unity: The homeland is united by the spirit of loyalty, power, and the common national wealth. Power and resources will be spread and shared fairly among the states, localities, and national strata without any bigotry or injustices.

The system of governance: The system of governance and its policy will be based on freedom and consultation, but without room for political denominationalism or party fanaticism and without room for lust for power or the spirit of conflict or corruption.

The judiciary: Judiciary is evidence, judgment, and observance of justice. It will be carried out by judges who are knowledgeable, unbiased, just, and with insight. It will be administered by an independent organization with a higher council.

Public and private life: Public life comprises responsible positions, integrity, and jihad performed by the Armed Forces and the police forces. It is security, defense of the homeland, and safety of society. It is carried out by employees, the common people, professionals, and workers to conduct administration and public transactions. Private life also comprises social and economic duties performed by workers for the benefit of society.

The economy: The economy will be run according to the principles of planning, discipline, freedom, construction, development, raising production, and the common good. Its relationships will be organized through control of transactions, incorruptibility, and justice.

Society: Society will be constructed by public education in the spirit of piety, orientation, and free awakening. It will be inculcated by the spreading of culture, education, arts, and sports. Ethics, good morals, and traditions will be fostered.

Foreign policy: The foreign policy of the homeland will be managed with dignity and independence, without isolationism or national fanaticism.

It will be fostered by living regional and international relations, for mutual understanding, cooperation, and human unity and in the spirit which guarantees justice and (?removes) injustice from the international system.

Chapter II: Principles of Duties and Attendance.

A. The duty of the pious citizen is truthfulness and honest expression. His right is the public law and freedom without coercion in matters of creed. There will be no restrictions on worship. There will be no injustice or discrimination in public rights on the mere consideration of personal faith.

B. It is the citizen's duty to seek knowledge and private work and to be friendly to others. His legal right is that there will be no division or discrimination on the basis of sex, social status, or financial status apart from legal justice.

C. It is the duty of the adult citizen to bring out his opinion and to express it for the public good. His legal right is freedom of public expression and participation in activities, unless constrained by the law.

D. It is the duty of the citizen to seek his livelihood and wealth for his private or public life, either as a competitor or a partner. He has the legal right not to be dispossessed of legitimate ownership. There will be no restriction on freedom unless enforced by the law.

E. It is the duty of the citizen to enjoy continuity and selection of abode for the private and public good. His legal right will be freedom of movement and settlement unless otherwise constrained by the law.

Chapter III. Constitutional Institutions and Changes

President of the Republic:

A. The Revolutionary Command Council will appoint on the basis of a constitutional decree a president of the republic.

B. Free elections will be conducted later to elect a president of the republic in accordance with the provisions and terms stipulated in a constitutional decree.

C. It will be conditional for the designated president in accordance with the provisions of Article 1 that he will have the qualifications of being a member of the Transitional National Assembly.

D. The president of the republic will be the head of state and assumes:

1. The competence of the RCC and its powers except the powers that follow:

a. The issuance of constitutional decrees.

b. Assenting to a declaration of war.

c. Declaration of a state of emergency and measures relevant to it.

d. Repealing of laws passed by the states.

2. The competence of the chairman of the RCC and his powers

3. The competence of the chairman of the Council of Ministers and his powers.

4. Powers mandated to him by the Council of Ministers.

5. Appointment of persons to occupy vacant high posts.

6. Competence and jurisdictions vested in him by constitutional decrees and laws.

The Vice President of the Republic:

A. The president is empowered to decree the appointment of a vice president or two vice presidents.

B. It will be a condition that the vice president will have the qualification of being a member of the Transitional National Assembly [TNA].

C. Before assuming office, the vice president of the republic will be sworn in before the president of the republic and in the manner stipulated in the decree appointing him.

D. The president of the republic may charge the vice president with exercising any of his own jurisdictions and powers. The first vice president of the republic will assume the jurisdictions and powers of the president in the absence of the latter.

Convening of National and Sectoral Conferences and the General Congress of the Political System:

Article 12 [as heard]: The national and sectoral conferences and the general congress of the political system will be held. The election of some members of the next national assembly will be held during the general congress. Later there will be direct popular elections for the rest of the members under provisions and terms to be stipulated in a constitutional decree. The TNA will continue to the end of the term to be stipulated by a constitutional decree.

Convening of State and Sectoral Conferences and their General Congresses of the Political System:

Article 13: The state and sectoral conferences and the general congresses of the political system will be held. During the general congresses, there will be elected some members of state councils before the end of March 1994. Thereafter, there will be direct popular elections for some members of the state councils, and this will be before the end of June 1994. All this will be done under provisions and terms to be stipulated by a constitutional decree.

Article 14: An elections law will be issued; general congresses; and direct popular constituencies. The law will fix the following:

A. Qualifications.

B. The right to be recommended and nominated. The candidate is to be (?supported) by a general public quarter in the conference or the constituency and not by the individual concerned.

C. The right to be elected. No one will be disqualified by virtue of his religious or political affiliations.

D. The elections will be organized by an independent commission, which will present the candidates without bias and fairly, and it will control election measures.

The Organization of the National Assembly and the elected State Councils:

Article 15:

A. Constitutional decrees will be issued to organize the national assembly and the elected state councils, which will be assigned the tasks of legislation and supporting temporary legislative decrees. They will pass and amend budgets. The Council of Ministers will express its confidence in them. They will issue general public decrees.

B. The chairmanship of the TNA will issue an ordinance to organize the meetings and work of the state councils.

C. The state councils will continue for two years unless the president of the republic decrees to extend the term or to dissolve the council and effect its re-election.

Issued by order of the RCC of the National Salvation Revolution and so on [as heard].

Proceedings Broadcast Live

AB1610212093 Paris AFP in English 1956 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Excerpt] Khartoum, Oct 16 (AFP)—Sudan's ruling military council dissolved itself Saturday [16 October] after appointing its chairman General 'Umar al-Bashir as president, in proceedings broadcast live on state-run television.

A decree transfered all the dissolved council's powers and those of the prime minister to al-Bashir "upon his swearing on the holy book." [passage omitted]

Al-Bashir Addresses RCC Session

LD1610221593 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Television Network in Arabic 1817 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Address by Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, RCC, for National Salvation and head of state, to the RCC in Khartoum on 16 October—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the Lord of all the universe. Peace and prayers be upon the most revered of all messengers, our lord Muhammad and his family and companions and all those who followed their footsteps until the day of resurrection.

Dear brothers, first, I would like, at this historic meeting, to thank the brother members of the RCC for the great trust they have placed in my humble person when they made me act for them in assuming the leadership of the RCC.

Really, you should be thanked for shouldering the historic task of leading the RCC with selflessness and sincerity and devotion. We thank God that the past years of governing have not changed the personalities of the RCC members or their frame of mind.

A commitment was assumed by the members from the first day of the outbreak of the revolution, i.e., to be an example to others at various work stations and to give the example that had long been absent from government in this country and others.

You have been the best model, and you have been the best example; you have been excellent brothers and friends and excellent leaders who give their life for the homeland. I say with all pride that throughout the past period we did not hear any accusation that could have blemished the reputation of any of us. Indeed, the conviction of everyone inside and outside Sudan and all observers—whether those who supported salvation or those who were hostile to it—have all been equally unanimous in vouching for the honesty and integrity of the RCC members. Indeed, all have praised their devotion and sincerity.

Today we would like to stress to everyone that we are not seekers of power and that we have not come to achieve personal ambitions. Today, the Revolutionary Command Council is being dissolved voluntarily and by choice. It is dissolving itself after having previously surrendered its executive powers to the council of ministers and its constitutional, legislative, and monitoring powers to the National Assembly. It is dissolving itself in renunciation of power, as an example to be followed, and out of commitment to the word given by the RCC to hand over power fully to the people.

Today, after brothers have been reassured and we feel reassured about the march of the revolution—that it has become the revolution of the Sudanese people and not that of the RCC—the revolution moves to a new phase, namely the persistence of the revolution on a new course and in a new way that facilitates the handing over of power to the masses.

Today, we stress to the world that we are not power seekers and that we came to hand over power after purging it of all blemishes and deficiencies. I would say that we have achieved great successes in every field. A neutral, or even hostile, observer cannot deny the achievements of the revolution in every field, whether in the field of national sovereignty, achievement of independence and liberating Sudanese decision-making from regional and international subordination, or in the security achieved in many parts of Sudan and in the promotion of the services offered by the state such as education, health, roads, airports, ports, and so on; I would say that we have made achievements with which we are satisfied despite the difficulties we have faced in our march during the previous phase.

While I thank my brothers for their trust [passage indistinct] ...in the revolution, the path of the revolution and the principles of the national salvation revolution.

I assure you that we will be eager to safeguard the unity of the homeland, its security, and its territorial integrity. We will seek to achieve peace irrespective of the costs and, God willing, not leave a door for peace without knocking at it.

I assure you of our commitment to the cultural orientation of the nation that was (?planned) by the national salvation revolution as an advancement for society, elevating it from the mountain slopes to the peaks, and purifying it of all flaws and shortcomings that used to prevail. We will pursue this course until the ideal, healthy society free from all illnesses and flaws is set up.

I assure you that I will be keen about Sudan's independence and the independence of national decision-making, and we will not compromise it no matter what the reasons, conditions, and stances might be. We will not mortgage the homeland's decision, either to regional or international forces, because the glory that has been achieved for the Sudanese people, or which has been restored to the Sudanese people because of the national salvation revolution, this glory and dignity will, God willing, be our concern and safeguarding it will be our (?practice). The homeland will neither fall nor bow and will not kneel to anyone other than God, to whom is ascribed all perfection and majesty.

I also assure you that we will safeguard and work toward embodying national unity away from partisan, sectarian, and tribal fanaticism—a unity for the sake of the homeland and in its orientation toward God, to whom is ascribed all perfection and majesty.

On this occasion, it does not escape me to praise the Armed Forces. I must praise the Armed Forces for assuming immense responsibilities in achieving security and safety for the citizens, in achieving stability, in protecting the homeland, its borders, and its territories. I salute them for exerting more effort to protect this homeland. It has sacrificed blood, sweat, and tears to protect the nation's achievements in all stances and areas. I salute the Armed Forces, which are working to rally the national rank in complete unity. Greetings to the unified police for what it is doing, and what it has done, in maintaining the homeland's security and the citizens' security, souls, and possessions. Greetings to the national service, the school through which we want Sudanese youth to be educated as a service to the homeland. Greetings to the legitimate child of the Armed Forces, the People's Defense Forces, which have become a school contributing effectively in restructuring the society and in purifying the society of numerous flaws, such as laxity, irresponsibility, and indifference. The People's Defense has become a school that prepares all the members of the Sudanese people, old and young, men and women, to build a healthy Muslim society free of all illnesses and shortcomings. I kneel to God to whom is ascribed all perfection and majesty. Peace and God's mercy be upon you.

Council of Ministers Resigns

EA1710190593 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Report by unidentified correspondent at Council of Ministers' meeting in Khartoum on 17 October—live or recorded]

[Text] This morning, Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, the president of the republic, chaired the Council of Ministers' ordinary meeting at the council's headquarters. At the beginning of the meeting, Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih briefed the Council of Ministers on the constitutional decrees issued on 16 October, which provided for the voluntary dissolution of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and charged Lt. Gen. al-Bashir to assume the presidency of the republic.

The Council of Ministers also praised the former members of the RCC and their unrivaled behavior and efforts, which confirmed that they did not come as powerseekers, but that they had hastened to do what they promised God to do. Now, ladies and gentlemen, here is the report of our correspondent at the Council of Ministers:

[Correspondent] Lt. Gen. 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the president of the republic, this morning at the secretariat of the Council of Ministers chaired an ordinary session of the Council of Ministers.

At the beginning of the meeting, Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, deputy chairman of the former RCC, briefed the Council of Ministers on the constitutional developments that occurred yesterday, which provided for the voluntary dissolution of the RCC and charged Lt. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir to assume the presidency of the republic. Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr said in his speech that the RCC session of yesterday was an historic one confirming the impartiality, courage, and sincerity of the former RCC members about the faith and the homeland and their interest in the natural development of political and constitutional action.

He stressed that what had happened was a new addition to the history of Sudan. His excellency said that when the members of the RCC assumed the responsibility for governing the country they came to save the country in accordance with defined programs. Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr said that the former RCC had issued some constitutional decrees that would assure the onward march of the revolution.

His excellency commended the RCC decision to choose Lt. Gen. al-Bashir as president of the republic for the traits his brothers, the former RCC members, recognized in him. Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr made it clear that the former RCC members had sworn to be soldiers of the revolution anywhere they were needed to do their duty.

Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr then reviewed the constitutional decrees issued by the former RCC before dissolving itself yesterday. They were Constitutional Decree No. 7, outlining the principles directing the policies of the state in all fields to ensure the onward march and course of the National Salvation Revolution: Constitutional Decree No. 8, providing for the appointment of a president of the republic and by means of which Lt. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir was appointed president of the republic. By the same decree Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih was charged with conveying those measures and decrees to the Transitional National Assembly: Constitutional Decree No. 9, on the transfer of powers and the means by which the former RCC was dissolved and its powers transferred to the president of the republic. Concluding his speech, Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih said on behalf of his brothers, the former members of the RCC, that they were at the beck and call of any orders or dispensations.

Then Mr. 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu, the minister of justice and attorney general, spoke commending the decision of the former Revolution Command Council [RCC] to dissolve itself voluntarily. He said this happened at a time when Sudan needed this constitutional post. He went on to say: Today we are passing through a new constitutional phase. He said the Council of Ministers was also an impartial council. His council proposed that the members of the Council of Ministers should tender their resignations to enable the president of the republic to select a new cabinet, in accordance with the requirements of the new constitutional developments which provide for Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir to assume the presidency of the republic. The members of the Council of Ministers then discussed the proposal and agreed to it, saying that the course of the revolution had been through experiences in which the endurance of the revolution was tested by challenges, which it had overcome very effectively.

The Council of Ministers praised the former members of the RCC and their unique behavior, as well as their abstemiousness, which showed that they were not after power and domination but true to their pledges to God. The members of the council of ministers pointed out that the revolution had originated a new model for the governance of Sudan, surmounted all the difficulties and challenges, and removed the Sudanese people from all the practices that disabled the governing of Sudan since independence.

The Council of Ministers described what happened yesterday as an addition to the Islamic and Sudanese legacy. It was a unique step reflecting the morality of the Sudanese people and the sincerity of their orientation, which was crowned with the announcement of the shari'ah.

The ministers also touched on the circumstances that prevailed before 30 June, 1989, and described the coming of the revolution as an inevitable step to destroy corruption and maintain the country's security and independence.

The Council of Ministers offered its thanks and appreciation to the former RCC for the efforts made to achieve the awakening and independence of Sudanese decisions. They also praised what had been achieved in the field of security and defense and in the course of consultation through the conferences held on various issues and whose recommendations had become work programs for the revolution. This had afforded the country political, economic, and social stability. The Council of Ministers accepted the priorities of the next stage, which would reflect the achievement of peace as a strategic goal. They undertook to work for social equilibrium and the achievement of political balance as well as toward rehabilitating foreign relations.

At the end of the session, Lt. Gen. al-Bashir, the president of the republic, spoke expressing his thanks and appreciation to the Council of Ministers for its commendation of the RCC. He said that the RCC had not come to power in a conspiratorial manner, but its coming had been a need imposed by political, economic, and social realities. His excellency pointed out that the RCC had been a model of impartiality and sincerity. He said the RCC had not adopted unilateral views on solving the country's great problems, but had consulted the people who hold views and learned people in all the conferences witnessed by the political arena.

His excellency the president said the course drawn up by the revolution would continue to be followed, adding: We will work for the implementation of all the slogans in an attempt to achieve the goals of the revolution with redoubled effort.

He described the decision of the Council of Ministers to tender the ministers' resignations willingly and with conviction as behavior commensurate with the spirit of the National Salvation Revolution. Finally, the president of the republic asked the ministers to continue in their posts and carry out their tasks until new dispensations were issued.

Al-Bashir To Address Assembly Session 25 Oct

EA1710193393 Khartoum SUNA in English 1658 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Khartoum, 17 Oct (SUNA)—President General 'Umar al-Bashir will address the Sudanese people through the Transitional National Assembly's (TNA) meeting on Monday, 25 October. The address will tackle the general policy of the country and programs of reformation and legislation.

The TNA will hold an ordinary meeting next Monday [18 October] under the chairmanship of Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, who will present features of TNA's new term.

The TNA will also hold a session on Tuesday [19 October] to listen to the Eighth Decree on the dissolution of the former Revolution Command Council (RCC), which will be presented by General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, former deputy chairman of the RCC. Khalifah explained that the TNA after listening to the Eighth Decree will issue a decision in support of Gen. al-Bashir's assignment as president of Sudan.

TNA chancellor Muhammad Ahmad Salim said that the Ninth Decree strengthened the TNA's constitutional powers by adding other powers to the TNA.

Khalifah Congratulates al-Bashir

EA1710193093 Khartoum SUNA in English 1612 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Khartoum, 17 Oct (SUNA)—Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah congratulated General 'Umar al-Bashir on being appointed by the [Revolution Command Council] as president of the republic. The TNA will hold a special session on the outcome of the RCC meeting of Saturday [16 October], Khalifah announced, adding the TNA's term of sessions address will be delivered during the special session of 25 October instead of next Monday [18 October].

The assembly will continue its march of shura (consultation) as it will pay due concern to alleviation of living conditions, Khalifah noted.

Meanwhile, Khalifah praised the assembly's delegations' performance within the recent regional and international conferences, referring to the importance of the meetings held by the delegations on the sidelines of the conferences in unveiling facts over Sudan's current situation.

Former RCC Members Praise Appointment

EA1710193693 Khartoum SUNA in English 1615 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Khartoum, 17 Oct (SUNA)—Major General al-Tijani Adam al-Tahir has stressed that the appointment of General al-Bashir as president of the Republic of Sudan is a right decision. Speaking at a historical meeting of the RCC [Revolution Command Council] Saturday [16 October], Maj. Gen. al-Tahir said the appointment was delayed, adding that it should have been taken since the appointment of the Transitional National Assembly. Al-Tahir has reviewed Gen. al-Bashir's efforts in implementation of shura (consultation) and restoration of peace and stability in the country.

The minister of energy and mining, Brigadier Salah Karrar, has praised Gen. al-Bashir's pioneer role in leading the Sudanese nation during the previous period. He reviewed the revolution's achievements in different fields.

Minister of Communication and Tourism Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Nayil Idam has welcomed the appointment of Gen. al-Bashir, saying that al-Bashir is capable of leading the Sudanese nation.

Qatar

Foreign Minister Confirms Meeting with Peres

NC1710184793 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 17 Sep 93

[Text] In an exclusive interview with MBC, Qatari Foreign Minister Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabbur Al Thani has confirmed that he met with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres two weeks ago. He explained the reasons and circumstances of the meeting. He denied there are plans to hold further meetings with Peres at present.

The Qatari foreign minister explained that he met with Peres on the sidelines of the recent 48th session of the UN General Assembly in New York. He added that his brief meeting with Peres came in the wake of the new factors in the Middle East.

[Begin Al Thani recording] You are aware that there are new factors. The peace process that started in Madrid drew our attention from the beginning. The State of Qatar participated in all the meetings on the peace process. The State of Qatar greatly believes in the issue of peace. It believes that all issues must be resolved by peaceful means or through the International Court of Justice. Therefore, we were pleased that our Palestinian brothers reached a solution or the beginning of a solution to their issue. This naturally prompted us to agree to meet with Mr. Peres to encourage them to proceed forward in the peace process. [end recording]

Asked whether this meeting with Peres was the first and why the announcement of this meeting was delayed until now, the Qatari foreign minister said:

[Begin Al Thani recording] Certainly, this was the first meeting. Why was the announcement about the meeting delayed? In fact, the subject, as far as we are concerned, is almost normal business. We also wanted to wait to see the results of the Syrian peace track. We are very interested in seeing progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. The news about the meeting is being announced now after there has been a lot of talk about this subject, claiming that it was a secret meeting. As you know, the State of Qatar is always clear and frank. On this premise, we wanted to clarify matters in a correct way. [end recording]

Yemen

New Presidential Council Elected 11 Oct

JN1410193793 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 12 Oct 93 pp 1, 2

[Text] Sanaa—Parliamentary sources in Sanaa have stated that the Yemeni House of Representatives yesterday elected a new five-member Presidential Council, including President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid.

The following are the five members of the new council, elected unanimously by all attending members:

'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, secretary general of the General People's Congress [GPC].

'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, GPC assistant secretary general.

'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] and vice president of the republic.

Salim Salih Muhammad, YSP assistant secretary general.

'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani, member of the Islamic Reform Grouping.

The previous Presidential Council, formed in the wake of the unity between the two parts of Yemen in May 1990, consisted of three GCP members and two YSP members. The new formation responds to an inclination to expand political representation in the council.

Parliament Speaker Sees 'Crisis of Trust'

PM1510113093 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Oct 93 pp 1, 4

[Report on interview with Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives, by Faysal Makram in Sanaa; date not given]

[Text] Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives and chairman of the Yemeni Reform Grouping's Higher Preparatory Committee, has said that "the current political crisis in Yemen is the result of the lack of trust among the ruling parties. It is basically a crisis of trust in its political aspect." In an interview with AL-HAYAH, Shaykh 'Abdallah added that this and the previous political crisis experienced by Yemen are the natural result of the situation experienced during the transitional phase in the united state between the two ruling parties, the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party.

Asked whether the current crisis ended with the election of the new Presidential Council, he said: "It is a good step and will, God willing, be a positive step toward ending the present crisis, which is temporary. And we must all work to consolidate trust and extend bridges among all the ruling coalition parties and the constitutional and national institutions. And through trust it will be easy to surmount all the difficulties."

On the unconstitutional atmosphere that prevailed in the parliament hall after the election of the Presidential Council, as Salim Salih Muhammad was selected uncontested rather than reelected in accordance with the Constitution after obtaining less than two thirds of the votes in the first round, Shaykh 'Abdallah said: "Some deputies tend to adopt an undemocratic attitude inside the hall. But Salim Salih Muhammad's election was constitutional, as he obtained the members' unanimity. I would like to stress that there was no circumvention of the House of Representatives. There was only a request to the house from heads of the parliamentary blocs of the coalition parties to elect the coalition list, but it was not imposed on the house. It was an ordinary request. Thus the house's legitimacy was not violated."

Asked what he told 'Ali Salim al-Bid when he met with him in Aden recently with members of the parliamentary committee, al-Ahmar said: "We told him that he is the second man in power in the country and that he is Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's partner in relation to attaining the great national achievement represented in the unification. And that they should look after this achievement, especially as they enjoy the appreciation and respect of all the Yemeni people. My presence in Aden means my presence in my country. As far as I am concerned, there is no difference between Sanaa and Aden. With regard to secluding himself in Aden, it is his business. It seems that he is accustomed to staying in Aden because he has been linked to it for 30 years; I have no other explanation. If you wish to ask any questions in this connection, I believe you should put them to him, and he will give you a clear answer. I am not authorized to answer on his behalf. However, I would like to say that the presence of brother 'Ali al-Bid and his brother President 'Ali Salih in Sanaa in these circumstances is necessary. I informed brother al-Bid of this."

[Makram] So how do you visualize an end to the current political crisis in the country?

[Al-Ahmar] Actually I am very optimistic. My long experience on the Yemeni national and political scene prompts me not to be pessimistic, because when crises intensify, a major and great breakthrough and good results acceptable to the homeland tend to emerge... there is no problem without a solution, and we are on our way toward solutions to the crises. Because Yemen has characteristics of which we are aware. These characteristics are always capable of extricating the country from the crises, as has been proved throughout history.

Al-Bid Boycotts Sanaa Anniversary Celebration

PM1510155693 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Oct 93 pp1, 4

[Reports by 'Abdallah Hammudah in Aden and Hammud Munsir in Sanaa: "Al-Bid Boycotts Sanaa Celebration; Socialist Party Awaits Divorce Signal"]

[Excerpts] 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Yemeni vice president and secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], did not attend yesterday's celebrations marking the 30th anniversary of the 14 October revolution against British occupation in southern Yemen. He insisted on not returning to the capital Sanaa "as long as the control mechanism remains as it is."

Al-Bid's seat on the right of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih on the main platform at the military parade ground was empty.

But the YSP seemed to want to keep the channels of contact with its "partners" in the Yemeni leadership open despite the problems with the General People's Congress [GPC]. Salim Salih Muhammad, Presidential Council member and assistant secretary general of the party [YSP], did go to Sanaa and did participate in the celebration.

Al-Bid stressed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that he would not go to Sanaa until the position of the north Yemeni members of the leadership is amended, "not even if my life depended on it," because he wants "to go to the capital of the Yemeni Republic, not the capital of the Yemen Arab Republic."

The seat of 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani, member of the new Presidential Council, on the main celebration platform was also empty because he had not yet taken the constitutional oath and therefore could not attend in his new capacity. Or at least, he did not attend because he wished to avoid the protocol confusion that would have resulted from the attempt to give him a seat on the front row.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the postponement the day before yesterday of the oath-taking by GPC Secretary General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Assistant Secretary 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, and 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani, representative of the Reform Party in the Presidential Council, in their capacity as members of the new Presidential Council, was at the request of Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives. Some sources say that al-Ahmar contacted President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and agreed with him to postpone the oath until tomorrow (Saturday) to avoid tension with the southern members of the leadership. [passage omitted]

Observers note that there was cautious calm in Aden yesterday. One citizen said: "We are used to this. It is what usually happens before every eruption in the situation." A YSP member said: "We are waiting for the divorce signal." In Sanaa, the mood is gloomy because of the current acute political crisis between the main partners in the united state (the GPC and the YSP). [passage omitted]

Council Sworn In

JN1610134593 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Brothers Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, the chairman of the Presidential Council, and 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Ghani, Salim Salih Muhammad, and 'Abd-al-Majid 'Aziz al-Zandani, members of the Presidential Council, took the constitutional oath in front of the House of Representatives this morning. The House session was held under House Speaker brother Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar. It was attended by Prime Minister brother Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, the brother deputy prime ministers, ministers, representatives of political parties and organizations, social figures, and local, Arab, and foreign correspondents.

After opening the session in the name of God and in the name of the people, the speaker of the House of Representatives delivered a speech in which he welcomed brother Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, the brother members of the Presidential Council, the prime minister, ministers, and all those who attended the session. He said: It is a great democratic event that the brother chairman and members of the Presidential Council will take the constitutional oath in front of the people's deputies before they embark on their tasks and assume the responsibility of leading the country for the next term. This House has granted them its confidence and chosen them to shoulder the great trust, which we hope the brother chairman and members of the Presidential Council will be the best to carry out, God willing. He added: Today is a special day because it also coincides with our people's celebrations of the glorious September and October revolutions.

The brother speaker of the House of Representatives said: Our country has experienced numerous difficulties during the transitional period. Our people have suffered and endured a great deal. They waited patiently until the general elections were held on 27 April 1993. Those elections have established a new political situation that differs greatly from the one before. They have marked the beginning of a new stage in which our people have been able to enjoy security and stability and in which justice and equality have prevailed. All this is taking place in a true democratic atmosphere that is free of empty slogans and political oneupmanship. At this stage, all political forces are pooling their efforts toward reconstruction and development and to establish the pillars of a modern state—a state of law and order, a state that protects the citizen and maintains his faith, money, honor and blood. It is a state that secures stability and psychological security for the people and gears the available potential and resources toward meeting the people's basic needs. The state will also work for real growth and development and will extract the wealth that God has granted to this people and exploit its revenues in fields of development that serve the homeland's interest and our future generations.

Our people see the elections as the start of a new chapter in their lives. This chapter is designed to remove all obstacles to the march toward new, wide horizons of construction, development, and decent living. This will be made possible by a commitment to the nation's constant principles and the instructions of its esteemed divine teachings, and by discarding all that conflicts with or contradicts these principles and teachings. By doing so, our people look forward to fulfilling their aspirations to consolidate national unity and remove all remnants and traces of the division.

First among these hopes is the completion of the unification of the Armed Forces and the security forces. These should become a single Yemeni institution, loyal to God, protecting the homeland and its sovereignty and independence. These forces should safeguard constitutional legitimacy from narrow-minded loyalty to political parties, districts, and tribes. These hopes also include unifying the currency and the laws and returning rights to their righteous owners.

The brother House speaker continued: These and other hopes and aspirations of our people can only be fulfilled if intentions are true, if there is confidence and cooperation, if the efforts of all sincere forces are pooled, and if everyone meets the level of responsibility dictated by our religion and by the interests of our homeland. It is extremely important that the political leadership and the government assume responsibility for outlining, in a clear national policy, the objectives that will fulfill the nation's future aspirations. They need to prepare step-by-step plans to achieve these objectives.

He added: We live in a world of rapid change and development. We are part of the world. We are affected by what happens in it. This compels us to deal with developments in a responsible spirit, and to do, seriously, whatever is in the interests of our people and country, avoiding problems and crises. Improving our relations with the brothers in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf is a priority that merits the attention of the leadership and the government. They should do all they can to expedite the realization of this urgent task in order to develop our relations with the brothers in the Arab and Islamic countries, as well as our friendly and cooperative relations with the rest of the world based on mutual respect and joint interests.

The brother House speaker addressed the brothers members of the Presidential Council: You have shouldered trust and great responsibility. We pray God to help you. We hope today will bring new movement toward sincere cooperation and positive, sincere action to serve the country, ending its deteriorated situation, overcoming the past's negative aspects, and avoiding false crises. We hope to see responsible dialogue become the way to resolve problems, especially because the formation of the Presidential Council has come to represent the coalition partners. This calls on all to be eager to make this council a success because it groups the primary, effective forces in society. Everyone pins their hopes on the council to overcome the current situation. It is asked to realize the government's program, on the basis of which confidence was given. This program will not be realized without the cooperation of the leadership and the government.

The House of Representatives speaker concluded: We stress that the House of Representatives will support every sincere effort seeking to serve this country. It confronts any action to harm the homeland, regardless of its source. The House will remain a vigilant overseer holding accountable everyone who fails to fulfill his duty or exposes Yemen to any danger, in accordance with its responsibilities and duties as stipulated by the Constitution. The House will also continue to represent the hopes and aspirations of the Yemeni masses, who have given it their confidence and made it keep their trust. It will not hesitate to return this trust to its rightful owners if it finds itself unable to fulfill its duties.

The House of Representatives speaker then read House of Representatives Resolution No. 3 of 1993 regarding the election of the Presidential Council. Following is the text of that resolution:

In its 22d session for the fifth period of the first round of the first annual term, held on 25 Rabi' Thani 1414 hegira, corresponding to 11 October 1993, the House of Representatives decided to elect the following brothers members in the Presidential Council:
Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih,
'Ali Salim al-Bid,
'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani,
Salim Salih Muhammad,
and 'Abd-al-Majid 'Aziz al-Zandani.

The House of Representatives speaker also read the message sent by brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid to the brother president and members of the House of Representatives speakership office. Following is the text:

Brother House of Representatives speaker, brother members of the House of Representatives speakership office, brother House of Representatives members: After I was informed of the request to report to your esteemed House to take the oath, I must first thank you for your confidence at a time when I feel I am holding a heavy trust, and hope the House of Representatives will lessen this heavy burden. Since I will not be able to attend today's session for reasons which you know about, I wish you will excuse me. I will work with you with all perseverance and seriousness to provide such a chance soon, God willing. From God we ask success.

Following that, brother Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, and brothers 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, Salim Salih Muhammad, and 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani took the Constitutional oath, which reads:

I swear by God almighty to (?sincerely) protect the republican system, respect the Constitution and law, look after the people's interests and freedoms, and preserve the country's unity, independence, and territorial integrity.

After taking the oath, brother Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih made a national historic speech to the people's deputies.

Al-Bid Apologizes for Missing Ceremony

JN1610114393 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] In Sanaa, four of the five-man Yemeni Presidential Council took the constitutional oath today before the House of Representatives. Former Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, who is currently in Aden, did not attend the session. The present members of the Presidential Council reelected Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih as chairman of the Presidential Council, which is the highest leadership body in the country. 'Ali Salim al-Bid, who has been living in seclusion in Aden since 19 August because of his differences with President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih over the political reform program in the country, sent a message to the House of Representatives in which he apologized for not being able to attend.

Salih, al-Bid Reelected

JN1610184093 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1718 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Report by Ahmad Birru from Sanaa]

[Text] The Yemeni Presidential Council members held their first meeting today after the parliament elected them a few days ago. They elected President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih as chairman of the council for a new term. They also elected the absent 'Ali Salim al-Bid as vice president. 'Ali Salim al-Bid did not attend the meeting. He was also absent when the House of Representatives elected the Presidential Council members.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and the attending council members 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani, and Salim Salih Muhammad took the constitutional oath. Salim Salih Muhammad conveyed to House of Representatives Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar an apology from Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, who is keeping out of the limelight in Aden, for not attending. He expressed the hope that the reasons behind his absence will be removed as soon as possible, and return to Sanaa to assume his tasks.

'Ali Salim al-Bid earlier proposed several issues among 18 points that he called for resolving in order to clear the political atmosphere in Yemen. These points are related to constitutional reforms, forming local administration committees in governorates and districts, and issues of reorganizing the army and security forces. The way of electing a president and a vice president was one of the most important points.

After taking the constitutional oath, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and the Presidential Council members held a news conference, during which they focused on the need to begin a new stage dominated by direct democratic dialogue and national interests on the domestic level, and by establishing the best relations between Yemen and Arab states, particularly the neighboring Gulf states.

Salih Addresses Deputies

JN1710084793 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] The Presidential Council held its first session yesterday after it was elected by the House of Representatives. During this session, brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih was elected chairman of Presidential Council in accordance with Article 84 of the Constitution. Brother Salih thanked the Presidential Council members for their confidence and said: We hope that we will all cooperate in what serves the nation, safeguards the homeland, and helps overcome problems in a manner that reinforces national unity and protects democracy. We hope to be up to the level of the nation's trust, rise above trivialities and grudges, and place Yemeni interests above all other considerations.

The chairman and members of the Presidential Council were earlier sworn in at a morning session held under the speakership of brother Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, who delivered a speech in which he welcomed the chairman and members of the Presidential Council and hoped the Presidential Council will assume its tasks and shoulder its great responsibilities after obtaining the House of Representatives' confidence. He also hoped this will herald a new era of security, stability, justice, and equality under true democracy—an era in which all join forces for the sake of construction, development, and entrenchment of the state of law and order.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih then delivered a historic, national speech before the people's deputies, in which he discussed the current national issues.

In another development, President Salih held a news conference at the Republican Palace in Sanaa yesterday. The members of the Presidential Council, Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, and ministers attended. The president and the Presidential Council members answered questions by correspondents from the local, Arab, and international news media on current national affairs as well as Arab and international issues.

A recording of the president's speech at the House of Representatives and the proceedings of the news conference will be broadcast this afternoon.

Salih House of Representatives Speech

JN1710153093 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1233 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Speech by Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Yemen Presidential Council chairman, at the House of Representatives in Sanaa on 16 October—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate:

Brothers, speaker, and members of the House of Representatives: First of all, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation and those of my colleagues, the members of the Presidential Council, to the members of the House of Representatives [words indistinct] for this dear confidence. I pray to almighty God that we will have a good opinion of the House and the masses of our people. [passage indistinct]

I pray to almighty God to bring us success in serving this nation. During this stage, the Yemeni homeland passed through a difficult test, but all sincere honorable people and all nationalists [words indistinct] together we tried to pass this difficult stage. Any concession is in the interest of this nation, not for any individual, party, or political grouping. The concession is for the people who rule themselves by themselves, the party that has the real interest in the revolution, unity, and democracy.

Dear brothers: Our tasks are difficult unless the efforts of the three branches of government—the legislative, the executive, and the judicial—combine together, and all cooperate in reiterating the call to some political organizations which [word indistinct] the House, and also to cooperate and maintain the national unity and the Yemeni unity for [words indistinct], and to cooperate together to maintain this historic great achievement which was realized on 22 May 1990. It is a great and historic achievement, but it requires that all political forces join ranks and avoid political bargaining and give priority to the homeland's interest.

Dear brothers: [Words indistinct] I did not want to speak much, but I said that there is a kind of disappointment as a result of that fabricated political crisis, and we all try to overcome these (?crises). I ask the brothers, the House of Representatives members, not to be disappointed. The country is in good shape, and we will have the good opinion of the masses and the nation's representatives. We will shoulder the trust and will abide by the political and party programs according to which we won the confidence of the masses on 27 April 1993.

There are three main programs: The political program of the General People's Congress, the political program of the Yemeni Socialist Party, and the political elections program of the Yemeni Reform Grouping. This is the joint axis that urges us to shoulder responsibility and to implement these programs, to move from the stage of slogans to the stage of practical implementation.

There were slogans before 27 April [words indistinct] the masses. God be praised. God granted success to the homeland. We won the content of our people's masses. We will start the application process. There are several main missions: Preserving Yemeni unity, enforcing order and law, respecting the Constitution, ending citizens' suffering, and turning this slogan into facts. I believe that over the past three and a half years, we have used a big shovel of destruction. The question for us as officials is how to overcome this and how to shoulder our responsibilities. This will not come just from the Presidential Council or the government if the three parties to the coalition government cooperate: The Congress, the Yemeni Socialist Party, and the Yemeni Reform Grouping. We also call on all effective political sides in the national arena to cooperate [words indistinct] to overcome this crisis through different opinions and political dialogue. There should be red lines for all of us that should not be transgressed, especially [words indistinct] taking some measures harming national interest.

Political forces in the arena are required, more than at any time before, to cooperate with the [words indistinct] to carry out all national duties. Everyone should resort to his conscientious [words indistinct] and overlook little differences and bypass the past mistakes of any party.

We did not say [words indistinct] any mistake [words indistinct] harms national unity and the homeland. Let us try to overlook these issues, shoulder our responsibilities, avoid political results, defend one another, and apologize to each other for all these little differences that have created a crisis inside the homeland. It was natural for them to take place but should not harm national unity [words indistinct]? There were different opinions and fear. Fear about what? Fear about unity and fear about the unity of the people for which we have sacrificed thousands of martyrs since the thirties, from September and from October and throughout the stages of the national order. We consider this the price of the homeland's safety and unity. Unity has been reinforced [words indistinct]. We will work for that [words indistinct] and open a new chapter of cooperation.

Personally, I wished not to be in this place and at the head of the authority. I wished to be an ordinary citizen [words indistinct]. I have 15 years of experience in government. However, I accepted this as a result of the abnormal situation. If the situation had been normal, I would not have agreed to be in the center of this authority. I reaffirm that we will have a good opinion of the people, the people's deputies, and all the national forces in the national arena.

In my name and on behalf of my colleagues, the members of the Presidential Council, I thank the speaker and members of the House of Representatives. God's peace and mercy be upon you.

Salih: Dispute With al-Bid Over

JN1710090693 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Addressing a news conference in Sanaa yesterday, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih emphasized that his dispute with South Yemeni leader 'Ali Salim al-Bid is over. He attributed the crisis to a scheme charted abroad. He said his reconciliation with 'Ali Salim al-Bid helped foil the plot, which was meant to sow chaos in the country and cause a split in national ranks. He, however, did not specify who was behind this plot.

Salim Salih Muhammad, member of the Yemeni Presidential Council and assistant secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party, led by 'Ali Salim al-Bid, took part in the news conference. Salim Salih Muhammad said that the southern leader [al-Bid] will soon come to Sanaa and perform his duties after taking the constitutional oath.

Salih Holds News Conference

JN1710184793

[Editorial Report] Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic at 1245 GMT on 17 October carries a 58-minute recording of the "proceedings" of a news conference held by Yemeni Presidential Council Chairman 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih at the Presidential Palace in Sanaa on 16 October. The news conference is attended by Presidential Council members 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, representative of the General People's Congress on the Council; Salim Salih Muhammad, representative of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] on the Council; 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani, representative of the Yemeni Reform Grouping on the Council; and Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas. The news conference is also attended by local, Arab, and foreign news media.

'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council and YSP secretary general, does not attend the news conference.

Reception is poor to unmonitorable.

During the news conference, Presidential Council Chairman Salih, and Presidential Council members Salim Salih Muhammad and 'Abd-al- Majid Zandani are asked about domestic and Arab issues.

President Salih says crises and problems are manifestations of a healthy phenomenon. He addresses the problem related to the election of the Presidential Council. He commends the cooperation demonstrated by the parties to the Yemeni Government coalition: The General People's Congress, the YSP, and the Yemeni Reform Grouping. He also lavishes praise on the democratization endeavor launched in Yemen.

When queried about the causes of the recent crisis between himself and YSP leader 'Ali Salim al-Bid, President Salih says that what some people call a crisis, he calls an event. He adds: "We deem the election of the Presidential Council an event, whereas people view such a thing as a crisis. We must understand this whenever we witness events, such as elections to the House of Representatives, an election of the Presidential Council, or elections to local councils." He contends that people view such events as crises because they are not accustomed to seeing democracy at work. He elaborates on the issue, saying recent developments could have taken a completely different course had it not been for democracy in Yemen. He adds that the current crisis has been "coped with" thanks to the goodwill demonstrated and the democracy prevailing in the country. He notes that the press has "a basic role to play to foster normalcy." He urges media persons to work to safeguard Yemeni unity and foster stability in the country.

President Salih affirms that Yemeni unity will remain intact. Asked about the slow pace of decentralization in Yemen, President Salih says: "We are about to review the Constitution. Some Constitutional reforms providing for decentralization will be submitted to the House of Representatives. Decentralization was called for in the political platforms of all political parties, whether they are inside or outside the government coalition." He adds: "We do not want it to continue to be said that centralization is the cause of the crisis. Were this the cause of the crisis, we would be willing to declare decentralization immediately, that is, if it were the cause of the crisis." He argues that decentralization is one of the causes of the crisis, maintaining that there are other causes of the crisis.

On the election of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani as a Presidential Council member representing the Yemeni Reform Grouping, Salih says: "We view this as a new addition to the Presidential Council, as the injection of new blood into the Council."

Salim Salih Muhammad, YSP representative on the Presidential Council, underscores the 18 points recently highlighted by the YSP Political Bureau to address the crisis in Yemen. Muhammad affirms the importance of a proper prioritization of issues.

Asked how Islam views the Gaza-Jericho First accord, Shaykh 'Abd- al-Majid al-Zandani, Yemeni Reform Grouping representative on the Presidential Council, says that Islam's attitude toward this accord has been expressed by Muslim clergymen inside and outside Palestine. He adds that he has just taken the Constitutional oath, and that no meetings for the Presidential Council have thus far been held. Given this, he declined to elaborate further on the issue.

Asked about his priorities after taking the constitutional oath before the House of Representatives, President Salih says that his priorities are "consecrating democracy, entrenching state institutions, and building them on scientific and national grounds, improving the living conditions of citizens." He mentions decentralization as a priority. He also underscores the pursuit of a democratic approach as well as the "peaceful exchange of authority."

President Salih adds that the problem with the YSP leader has been "left behind us and coped with." He goes on to say: "We might have thwarted a scheme designed to create confusion within the homeland and sow dissension within national ranks [words indistinct] in the Yemeni arena. Those who hatch plans abroad are unaware of the Yemenis' disposition and peculiarities. Thanks to the lessons we have learned from the era of fragmentation, we will not allow anybody [words indistinct]." He notes Yemenis confrontation of previous conspiracies, adding: "This has been a new conspiracy against unity." He maintains that Yemenis will not allow any foreign scheme to succeed. He argues that foreign schemes seek to take advantage of some loopholes in the domestic front.

Elaborating on the crisis, President Salih says: "Yemenis have been fed up with conflicts, with fragmentation, with all these problems. They believe that their sole gains have been unity first and democracy second."

When asked whether domestic Yemeni problems could slow down the pace of Yemeni efforts to achieve inter-Arab reconciliation, President Salih says: "Regardless of domestic developments, our policy is clear. Our foreign policy is firm. We, along with fraternal Arabs, will spare no effort to rebuild Arab solidarity, put the Arab house in order, and turn a new page in the aftermath of the Gulf war." He notes the efforts of the Arab League secretary general in this regard. He adds: "In this regard, we rely on the role of fraternal Egypt, which can make a positive effort to reestablish Arab solidarity. It is the responsibility of Egypt, other countries, and all Arabs to strive to revive Arab solidarity."

President Salih comments on the visit French President Mitterrand will make to Yemen on 18 October, saying: "We welcome the French president's visit. We believe that this visit will promote bilateral ties, although the ties between Yemen and France are good at present."

Responding to a question on the proposal Yemen made to host a reconciliation meeting between the PLO and the Palestinian factions opposed to the self-rule accord with Israel, President Salih says: "The offer we made in this regard is still standing. We proposed to the fraternal Palestinian faction leaders that Yemen host this meeting in Sanaa on 30 October. This reflects the desire of Yemen—leadership, government, people, and institutions—not to see Palestinian blood shed, and to prevent involvement in a Zionist scheme aimed at exploiting differences among PLO factions." We, he added, want these factions to agree on common denominators, on what could promote the interests of the Palestinian Arab people.

Salih notes that there is goodwill on the part of the Yemeni leaders to cope with the difficulties facing unified Yemen, contending that the emergence of these difficulties is natural, given the fact that unity is only two years old. Justifying the recent political crisis in Yemen, President Salih says: "Our experience is limited." He argues that Yemeni leaders will eventually attempt to resolve difficulties. He adds that as long as Yemeni leaders have the will, it will be possible for them to cope with all difficulties.

With respect to his conception of how the Yemeni Armed Forces could be unified, President Salih says: "This was enshrined in the government statement. God willing, the parties to the government coalition will address not only the issue of the unification of the Armed Forces, but also other issues, as well. Implementation of measures in this regard will begin, God willing."

President Salih expresses a willingness to resume border talks with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, saying that Yemen has good faith toward the issue of resolving the border problem with Saudi Arabia. He says that the resolution of the border issue with Oman is an example for resolving border issues among brothers.

President Salih answers a question on corruption, arguing that proof and evidence must be made available so proper measures can be taken against the corrupt in the country. He appeals to "all honorable forces, to all nationalist forces, to all official monitoring agencies," and to the parliament, as well, to examine this issue.

The recording of the "proceedings" of President Salih's news conference ends at 1343 GMT.

Salih Meets Military: 'Negative Aspects' Viewed

JN1810132593 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, in the presence of brothers 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani and Salim Salih Muhammad, members of the Presidential Council, today received brothers Interior Minister Brigadier General Yahya al-Mutawakkil and Defense Minister Brigadier General Haytham Qasim Tahir, in addition to Staff Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Malik al-Siyani, the chief of staff; the commanders of the Defense and Interior Ministries; and the commanders of the Armed Forces and security. They congratulated the brother chairman and members of the Presidential Council on their election. They also expressed pleasure on this occasion and stressed their readiness to double efforts to promote performance in these organs and to play their role in protecting the constitutional legitimacy and safeguarding the homeland's sovereignty and the people's gains. They also expressed readiness to maintain the peoples unity and enhance security and serenity in the community.

The brother supreme commander of the Armed Forces expressed his thanks and those of the Council members for the command and personnel of our armed and security forces on this occasion. He said: I thank you all for these good feelings. We in the leadership hope to be up to the expectations of our colleagues and comrades in arms in the armed and security forces on various levels.

President Salih said that the leadership will begin a new chapter in building a new Yemeni state, the state of order and law, the state of constitutional legitimacy. He said: We in the leadership will give these two national institutions much interest and care, and we will circumvent the negative aspects of the previous phase. The negative aspects that happened in the past were not deliberate. As a result of objective circumstances, it was natural for these negative aspects to happen. They also resulted from shifting from two separate republics to a new Yemeni state; namely, the Yemeni state in which, on 22 May 1990, the international character of both the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen was dissolved.

The president added: Praise be to God, with the support of these two national institutions, and thanks to the militant spirit of all the honorable men, the leadership managed to fulfill that national dream.

Regime Reportedly Moves 16 Divisions South

NC1610091393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0830 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Kuwait, 16 Oct (MENA)—The MENA correspondent in Kuwait has learned that Iraq recently massed troops in the south. A total of 16 divisions—six mechanized infantry divisions, six armored divisions, and four infantry divisions—were recently moved to southern Iraq.

Responsible sources have noted that Kuwait is closely following these Iraqi movements which, so far, do not pose a threat to Kuwait's security. The sources added, however, that all the necessary preparations have been made as a precaution against any contingency.

Speaking to a MENA correspondent, the sources expressed their belief that Iraq cannot embark on any irresponsible act against Kuwait or neighboring countries at present, particularly since it is in a weak military position and is being monitored closely as a precaution against regional threats.

In another development, the Kuwaiti police outpost of al-'Abdali farms yesterday, Friday, came under Kalashnikov fire by Iraqis stationed in the farms opposite the post. No casualties have been reported.

SAIRI Accuses Baghdad of Using Chemical Weapons

LD1610223993 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 2100 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Iraqi opposition sources said that the Iraqi regime has begun to use chemical weapons and poison gases against the Iraqi resistance in the south, leading to the displacement of large numbers of inhabitants to other areas. A Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] statement said that the Baghdad regime had used chemical weapons in its latest attack on the Hawr Abu Zaki region in Basrah Governorate, and had set up artillery with chemical ammunition in the al-Dirah and Al-Rumaylah regions, in order to use it against Iraqi opposition forces in the south.

The statement added that the Iraqi regime had continued its operations to drive out the inhabitants of southern villages near the marshes and had warned them of serious consequences if they failed to leave their villages and make for other regions.

The Iraqi regime's practices of using chemical weapons and poison gases against the inhabitants are a result of its failure to put an end to the increasing Iraqi resistance in Iraq.

Marsh Residents Flee After Attack

JN1510202393 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 oct 93

[Text] Our sources in (Sulayyim) marshland in al-Basrah Governorate report Saddam's criminal regime lost its senses and shelled (Sulayyim) marshland with chemical weapons early this week.

After the regime's fleeing forces became convinced they could not enter the area using conventional weapons, they committed this cowardly action. Scores of civilians were injured by chemical materials.

Our sources said symptoms including difficult breathing, a skin rash, and inflammation of the mouth, throat, and eyes were observed following the aggression.

Hundreds of (Sulayyim) marshland inhabitants have fled toward the Iranian border seeking safety from the attacks of tyrant Saddam and his mean mercenaries, who are launching the ugliest criminal campaigns against our people in the marshlands these days.

Our sources learned from outside the homeland that hundreds of refugees who [words indistinct] Islamic Republic of Iran were admitted into special camps after Islamic Iran arranged for their living requirements in these camps.

A refugee told a news agency that the conditions in (Sulayyim) marshland are tragic, that the people there lack food, drinkable water, and medicines, and can be exposed to mass annihilation at any moment by the criminal regime in Baghdad.

Iranian Foreign Ministry Delegation Arrives

JN1710162993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1605 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Oct (INA)—Javad Zarif, deputy for international affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry, arrived in Baghdad today at the head of a delegation on a visit of several days to Iraq.

INA has learned that tomorrow, Monday, the Iranian delegation will start talks with the Iraqi Foreign Ministry delegation led by Sa'd 'Abd-al-Majid al-Faysal, senior Foreign Ministry under secretary. Other senior Foreign Ministry officials will participate in the talks.

INA also learned that the two sides' talks will pave the way for the meeting of the two countries' foreign ministers that will be held in Baghdad at a later time to settle pending issues between Iraq and Iran. The most important of these issues is the release of Iraqi prisoners in Iran.

The Iraqi and Iranian charges de'affaires in Tehran and Baghdad will also take part in the talks.

Radio Berates al-Asad, Arab-Israeli Meetings

JN1710145193 Baghdad Voice of Arab Syria in Arabic 0802 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Sons of our people in wounded Syria, free sons of the Arab nation, brother Arabs everywhere: A group of Arab rulers is currently engaged in a race to Tel Aviv. Their objective is to appease the Hagana and Stern gangs—the gangs of Zionist usurpers, the executioners of our Palestinian Arab people, the usurpers of holy Jerusalem, the occupiers of the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon, the murderous butchers, who for five decades have annihilated tens of thousands of our people and Arab brothers.

Good Arab citizens have been brought up to love their national soil and to be prepared for struggle to liberate their national soil and maintain their freedom and dignity. They are surprised and astonished to see and hear what has not even crossed the minds of Zionist extremists and the leaders of British, U.S., and other colonialists. Arab capitals, honor guards, airports, hotels, restaurants, royal palaces, presidential palaces, and foreign ministries are ready to receive Yosi Beilin, Shim'on Peres, and Yitzhaq Rabin. At the same time, these capitals are declared off-limits to the free sons of Palestine, Syria, Sudan, Yemen, Iraq, and all free sons of Arabism. Meanwhile, invitations are being issued and efforts intensified to repeal all UN anti-Zionist resolutions stating that the Palestinian Arab people have rights to their homeland, rights which must be restored. Moreover, those rulers are engaged in fervent efforts to lift the Arab League's boycott of the Zionist enemy. Thus, the Zionists are not our enemies anymore, nor are they usurpers. They do not occupy the Golan Heights, Palestine, and southern Lebanon. The Zionists have not killed our children, nor did they fight us and pour their hatred on us. Overnight, they have become the good poor ones whose souls, property, and lands have been pillaged by us, the sons of the Arab nation!

With such brazenness and haughtiness, which is characteristic of traitors and rascals, those rulers are now falsifying history and reversing facts. Thus, the enemy has become a close ally, while the brother has become a bitter enemy. They are calling for lifting the boycott of the Jews and prolonging the blockade imposed on our people in fraternal Iraq. A brother has become an enemy, a usurper, and an aggressor who must be fought. Have they not started their heinous misdeed by joining the Zionist gathering in Hafar al-Batin? Have they not sent our Arab armies to fight fraternal Iraq? Have they not placed our soldiers under the command of the Jews, Zionists, and Americans? Have they not boasted about launching such-and-such air raids along with Zionist, U.S., British, and French planes on Arab Iraq? Have they not boasted that their siege of Iraq is tight and that they are going ahead with their bid to starve Iraq with its population of 19 million Arab and Muslim people?

Shame on them! Shame on Hafiz al-Asad! He has immediately slipped among the Zionist ranks, raised America's flag, bowed to kiss the ground under Bush's feet, begged for a meeting—yes, a meeting—with the terrorist butcher, Yitzhaq Rabin. Still, he is unashamed; he is still raising slogans of Arabism, unity, freedom, progress, and Arab solidarity. What is more? He is raising the slogan of liberation.

Our people have for a while distanced themselves from the openly agent governments in the Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula, and in al-Sadat's and broker Husni's Egypt. However, our people thought that in the veins of Hafiz al-Asad and other pretenders of Arabism and liberation there must be a drop of Arab blood and that in their bodies there must be an iota of national dignity and sincerity. They also thought that there might be a hope for the conscience of al-Asad and other pretenders to wake up, only to discover that al-Asad is proving to our good people and all the Arab nation that he neither belongs to the Arab nation nor to Syria. Had al-Asad been truly affiliated with Syria, he would have not ignored the suffering of our people in Iraq and he would have not ignored the ongoing relinquishment, sellout, and treason in the name of realism and international circumstances.

We realize that Hafiz al-Asad is fully responsible for all that is taking place. We only meant to remind the sons of our people and nation of that they have a noble, sacred, legitimate duty toward defending themselves, the homeland, and the Arab future. What is taking place is an exposed attempt to destroy the Arab nation—this time from within.

In the past, the Zionist enemy was an exposed enemy. But thanks to those who hurried to Madrid and Washington, this enemy has obtained a permit to enter our homes, schools, streets, markets, mosques, villages, and cities after it has already entered the palaces of the treasonous rulers, airports, and foreign and defense ministry buildings in many Arab countries.

Woe to us if we surrender to or ignore this fateful sweeping danger. Perhaps the first step down the right path is to remove whoever has opened the gates of our countries to the murderous Zionist invaders and their Americans allies, the enemies of our Arab nation, homeland, and people.

Rabin to Syria: 'We Do Not Work Under Threats'

TA1710175293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Report by Shulamit Schmerling]

[Text] Over 2,000 representatives of each and every component of the Israeli Arab sector today arrived to Nazareth to hear the prime minister and voice support for the agreement with the Palestinians. Those who attended the convention shared the enthusiasm, the great hope, and the profound satisfaction. There was no mistaking the warmth and approval which surrounded Yitzhaq Rabin today.

Addressing the convention merely 10 hours after landing at Ben- Gurion, Rabin admitted: I felt that touring the world today is nice as an Israeli in general and as the Israeli prime minister in particular. He said he received Indonesian President Suharto's promise to use his clout as chairman of the Nonaligned Movement to moderate the stands of radical anti-agreement countries.

He called on rich Arab countries to open their pockets to Palestinians from the territories so as to help with the implementation of the agreement, warning that without economic and social advancement alongside with political progress, the future of the process would be in jeopardy.

As soon as applause and the singing of peace songs subsided, Rabin held an impromptu news conference where he reacted for the first time to the Syrian threat to stay away from the Washington talks: We do not work under threats, the prime minister said.

[Begin Rabin recording] We do not work under threats. We want to continue the negotiations, and we will continue them. If a certain date is inconvenient for the Syrians, if they need another date, that should be no problem. We are committed to continuing the peace process with Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. The fact that we have achieved an agreement with the Palestinians, with the PLO, does not automatically obligate us to reach an agreement with a party with which the conditions are not ripe as yet. [end recording]

As for the release of prisoners and detainees, the prime minister admitted: There is talk of large numbers, and for that very reason, the issue should be left to the appropriate committee which will negotiate the issue in accordance with guidelines.

[Begin recording] [Rabin] The issue of prisoners, detainees, and fugitives who have abandoned terrorist activities will be discussed by the teams negotiating the Gaza-Jericho First issue. Generally speaking, we will definitely decide to release prisoners and detainees.

[Correspondent] Do we know how many, Prime Minister?

[Rabin] We will have to discuss criteria and stages. All these things will be done in negotiations. I am not speaking of an individual here and there; there has been talk of large numbers, and therefore the entire issue should be part of the negotiations on the implementation of Gaza-Jericho First. [end recording]

The next issue was indirect criticism of Deputy Minister Yosi Beilin and the question of whether the permanent status should be discussed today. Without naming names, the prime minister said explicitly:

[Begin Rabin recording] I do not think so. There is a government policy according to which the agreement—per the Madrid conference invitation and the agreement signed in Washington—refers to the interim arrangement. At this point the government must focus on one thing only: implementing the agreement in the manner and stages to which we have committed ourselves in the exchange of letters and the declaration of principles agreement. Any reference to the permanent status components at this time would be a grave error, because it may harm the practical steps which are going to be the testing ground for the future. [end recording]

Talks With Syria Suspended; 'Priority' to Jordan

TA1810100893 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 18 Oct 93 p 1

[Report by Amnon Barzilay]

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres have agreed to give priority to negotiations with Jordan and suspend negotiations with Syria for the time being.

Rabin's associates estimated last night that the Washington talks will not resume before the end of November. According to them, "Rabin is not moved by the delay in resuming the talks." Sources close to both said that Rabin and Peres have reached the conclusion that progress with the Palestinians should not be made without making parallel progress with Jordan.

The sources reported yesterday that Rabin and Peres prefer to placate Jordan first because, among other reasons, an agreement with it does not entail making concessions that threaten the stability of the government. They noted that Rabin was never enthusiastic about concluding talks on all fronts at the same time. [passage omitted]

Official Urges Syrian Change of Strategy

TA1410190893 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Interview with Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir by Shlomo Ganor and Yoni Ben-Menahem; recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles on 14 October at the studio; processed from the Hebrew]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Ben-Menahem] Mr. Savir, you speak of the vision that shall come to pass in the latter days....

[Savir, interrupting] No, no. Allow me to interrupt you. You always use this coin, which is a mistake. I tell you, we have been talking to very seasoned U.S. businessmen who think of tomorrow and have no time to waste....

[Ben-Menahem, interrupting] Yes, but can this be done without Syria?

[Savir] If we do not think about it in realistic, economic, terms and only talk of visions, it will not happen. As for Syria, let me tell you what I believe will happen. If the peace train continues moving, what will be the alternatives of Syria or other countries? They will simply be left aside.

[Ganor] Do we want to isolate Syria in that sense?

[Savir] Absolutely not. Syria is currently isolating itself. If it wants to board the train, it is welcome to it. There is an Israeli partner, but on one condition. The train ticket says that if Syria, or any other country, wants to board the train, it should accept the terms Israel and the Palestinian had. That is: full peace; reconciliation; economic cooperation; regional cooperation. Look, the agreement of principles with the PLO contains clearly described projects. There is an entire addendum which speaks of ways Israel and the Palestinians are to cooperate on regional development. Syria will only benefit if it chooses to buy the ticket. It will be doing us no favors and will find an Israeli partner for negotiations on all subjects.

[Ben-Menahem] Is a Rabin-al-Asad meeting the only way Syria can board the train? Is this the only way to promote the issue?

[Savir] This is just another clause on that ticket. We are ready for the meeting, but we are not asking or begging for it. If al-Asad believes that he has an interest in making peace with Israel, peace as such must be his own business. Syria should not view peace as a price it has to pay. It is a prize it will receive. Peace frees Syria from wars, allowing it to advance its own economy. If it does not believe that peace is in its self-interest, I believe there will be no progress. If it does, it should entail meetings on the senior levels; joining the multilateral process; having economic cooperation with Israel; developing the Middle East; and establishing diplomatic relations. If this happens, we will discuss all the other matters.

[Ganor] Judging from your personal experience and the experience of the State of Israel from the negotiations with the PLO in Oslo—in which you played a central role—is there a need for an addition channel of communication between Israel and Syria, other than the Washington track?

[Savir] Anything Syria accepts, we will too. At present, it seems to me that the Syrians have chosen to work through U.S. mediation. The U.S. peace team will arrive here, perhaps even the secretary of state, and we will talk through it. We are ready to tell Syria directly anything we tell the Americans, although we have full confidence in the U.S. role in promoting this issue. I believe the Americans understand that, in seeking peace with Syria, Israel wants to see not only the Syrian willingness, but that of the entire region. An Arab world that opens to cooperation with us, will find us ready to reach an arrangement with Syria as well. If the Arab world remains closed to us, if it tries to isolate the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, if it keeps up the boycott, if Syria keeps boycotting direct meetings—it will find Israel protecting its interests with other means. We care about security and the economy, and if our partner is willing to accept the path we are offering—by all means. If the Arab world remains closed, including Syria, we will go on with the Palestinians and the Egyptians. We will show the model which, eventually, others will also join.

[Ganor] You, however, have not answered my question: Is there a need for a secret channel of communication between Israel and Syria? Perhaps it already exists?

[Savir] If it exists, I am not familiar with it. I believe that anything that can advance the issue, will be beneficial. I do not believe Syria is currently interested in such a channel. It seems to me that, probably because they want to earn American dividends, Syria wants to continue working through the United States and we certainly accept this, seeing that we and the Americans share our interest in this. This issue was raised in the Peres-Clinton discussion, where the foreign minister explained our positions on the Syrian issue to the President. I believe he found an attentive ear. We will work with the United States vis a vis Syria with a clear stand and a true willingness to attain peace.

[Ganor] Did Egyptian President Mubarak ask for more Israeli openness to Syria in his meeting with Peres yesterday?

[Savir] I would not put it that way. Egypt has an interest in the Syrian and Jordanian issues. They have an interest in a Middle East which, though 15 years late, follows Egypt's footsteps. At the same time, Damascus should show openness. His message should be addressed there. I believe he knows us well, and knows where Israel is open and where it will not agree to pay a price for a reality it cannot accept.

[Ben-Menahem] Has Israel placed a message for President al-Asad in the hands of President Mubarak?

[Savir] Everything we say in public is also said in diplomatic and in secret discussions. There are no different messages. Believe me, al-Asad is not coming now not because he is not familiar with Israel's stands—he is, but, judging from remarks they had made, he is not yet ready for the peace we want. Once he is ready, he will find an attentive partner, ready to negotiate all the aspects, including territory.

[Ben-Menahem] The Americans and President Mubarak are saying that an Israeli-Syrian agreement of principles can be attained this year. Do you share their optimism?

[Savir] I am all for optimism because it gives you more energy and makes you creative. Eventually, however, the

Syrians will have to change strategy. Look, the Palestinian move teaches us that when there is Arab openness, it meets Israeli initiative and work. We do not believe peace is heaven sent. Creativity and courage is needed. We need the knowledge of how to do it. At the same time, we need a partner, otherwise nothing can be done. [passage omitted]

Peres on Accords With Jordan, Palestinians

TA1710170593 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Studio interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Amnon Levi "a short while ago"—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Levi] Good evening, Mr. Foreign Minister.

[Peres] Good evening.

[Levi] Are you concerned with the fact that Syria will not attend the peace talks, that it may even join the opponents of the peace process and try to sabotage it?

[Peres] I would like Syria to attend, but it has to be a Syrian decision. I think Syria will discover that it has been exaggerating its power to disrupt or assist the process. It should regard peace as a Syrian-Israeli issue, as negotiations between equals. [passage omitted]

[Levi] Judging by today's press reports, the first issue on the agenda is not Syria or even the PLO, but Jordan. Political sources in Jerusalem are quoted as saying that the first agreement to be signed very soon is with Jordan. Is it true?

[Peres] I am not prepared to make guesses. I think the agreement with the Palestinians should be complemented by one with Jordan. I think that to allow the agreement with the Palestinians to get off the ground, a complementary move with Jordan should be accomplished. We need to form an economic-political triangle made up of the Jordanian, Palestinian, and Israeli sides. Anyone reading the territorial and demographical maps will realize there is no alternative but to forge such a trilateral agreement.

[Levi] Your observation brings to mind similar remarks by your deputy, Yosi Beilin, which caused some commotion in the Labor Party. He said it was easier to reach agreement on a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation than to tackle the autonomy issue. Is that a far-reaching interpretation of....

[Peres, interrupting] I was referring to the present stage, not to the final, permanent status. What I said was that at the present stage we and Jordan have a signed agreement on the agenda, which is in fact a blueprint agreement. This agreement contains references to controversial points; very few issues remain to be discussed before a full agreement with Jordan can be attained. When that happens, we will have a full agreement with Jordan, a partial or temporary agreement with the Palestinians, and an economic agreement comprising all three, or rather all four elements, including Egypt which is situated at the Red Sea and is therefore also a party.

[Levi] You are then disagreeing with your deputy, who said that we should address....

[Peres, interrupting] Come, come, this needs to be elucidated.

[Levi] He did made these remarks publicly; it was not a leak.

[Peres] What does one have to do with the other? You asked for my opinion. I do not know exactly what you were citing. Ask me for my own opinions, and I will tell you.

[Levi] Let my ask you, then, about your meeting with the foreign minister of Qatar. How was it?

[Peres] Okay.

[Levi, laughing] Look, the foreign minister of Qatar has confirmed it, so perhaps you can tell us what it was that you sought to achieve in that meeting.

[Peres] He said that we sought ways to achieve peace and settle our controversies. After all, we would like to reach agreements with all 22 Arab countries. We want a comprehensive, sweeping agreement, one that will put an end to the absence of normalcy in the Middle East relationships. There is no reason not to achieve normal relations with all the countries, with the exception of several loony countries, such as Iraq, Iran, possibly Libya. This is what we strive to and take action toward. [passage omitted]

[Levi] Let us address the agreement with the PLO. You said yesterday that you believed most of the Palestinian detainees would be released, that circumstances have changed. What is our guarantee that these people who have a terrorist past will not take up their old ways?

[Peres] They decided to mend their ways after trying terror. After they tried terror and realized its limitations, they concluded that they wanted to negotiate with Israel. If they again take up arms, they will forfeit everything they will have gained, and they will not achieve any of their objectives. The only way to reach an arrangement with Israel is through negotiations, not through shooting or violence. Israel will not be swayed either by wars or violence.

I would like to tell you here that many of our experts voice their views on the basis of their previous knowledge of the Arab world. The world has changed drastically, and the world of yesterday no longer exists. There is no USSR, no Third World, no aid from Saudi Arabia. All these things are finished. There is a new situation of which all the sides are aware. [passage omitted]

Rabin Returns From, Comments on Far East Visit

Rabin Holds News Conference

TA1710072993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0556 GMT 17 Oct 93

[News conference with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin from Ben-Gurion Airport upon his return from Far East visit—live]

[Text] [Rabin] Good morning. I would like to open my statement—made following my visit to the Far East, and especially the PRC—by thanking the leaders of China, who hosted me. I held the first ever visit by an Israeli prime minister to China. I would like to open with the remark that the mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO and the signing of the declaration of principles on Palestinian self-rule in the territories—the interim arrangement—have created a very comfortable international atmosphere for Israel. I found great openness during this visit, mainly in China. I found willingness to support the agreement, to act internationally for attaining maximum support for the agreement. In bilateral issues as well there is more willingness to cooperate on issues of mutual interest to both countries.

I met the president of China and was guest of Prime Minister Li Peng. I met most of the PRC's ministers. The atmosphere was extremely friendly and congenial. I also visited Shanghai and was amazed by the tremendous development of building projects and new infrastructure there. This is a city of 13 million residents, and 2 million more arrive there daily, and one witnesses tremendous economic development. I saw a bridge built by Chinese engineers, which is the longest hanging bridge in the world. I am extremely impressed by the ability and desire to develop and strengthen the Chinese economy. I saw a country of 1.2 billion people which is undergoing an unusual process of economic development. I believe that as a result of this, economic relations will be further developed. This month the PRC's agriculture minister will hold an open visit here with a view toward establishing agriculture cooperation, including the possibility of establishing a joint Chinese-Israeli model farm, especially in arid areas. I believe that together with them we can find solutions to problems we are both facing.

In this opportunity that I had in the Far East and following an inquiry, Indonesia's President Suharto—who is the current chairman of the Nonaligned Movement—agreed that I should visit Jakarta and meet him. The visit was held on Friday [15 October], which was not a very convenient date, but it was the only day I could make the visit. On the one hand, there were the limitations imposed by prayers in the Mosques. Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world, with 190 million people. On the other hand, being prime minister of the Jewish state, I had to arrive in Singapore before the Sabbath. Under these restrictions we met, between the end of the Muslim prayers and the Jewish Sabbath.

I also saw something symbolic here. The Nonaligned Movement was established in 1955, in the city of Bandung in Indonesia, near Jakarta—where I met President Suharto. The statement issued then was virulently anti-Israeli. Today, President Suharto expressed—both in public and in the meeting with me—his support for the peace process and the agreements made with the Palestinians and the PLO. He also expressed willingness to open channels for bilateral cooperation.

I attach great importance to meetings with leaders of the Nonaligned Movement—leaders of Muslim and other countries which belong to this movement. I have no doubt that this should be considered a signal. On the eve of this month's meeting in Seattle of Far East countries with the United States, I consider the very fact that this meeting was held as a breakthrough which will be followed with other countries. This meeting was initially kept a secret, but it was widely reported on in all the front pages of the newspapers, including photographs of our meeting. This is no longer done covertly, but rather openly, with public support for the peace process and the agreements which have been achieved.

In Singapore, I held a lengthy unofficial meeting with Lee Kuan Yew, the spiritual father of Singapore. I invited him to visit Israel. He answered that he has often received such invitations and has always replied with gratitude, but he told me that he will, indeed, visit Israel. I assume that he will visit Israel early next year. After the Sabbath I held a meeting with the prime minister in his office. From there we flew to Nairobi.

I was extremely satisfied that Kenyan President Moi asked to meet me at the airport. We held a lengthy meeting. Kenya was one of the first African countries to resume full diplomatic relations with us. After the Six-Day War, when all the African countries severed relations with us, Kenya also severed formal relations, but enabled us to continue flying El Al airliners through Kenyan airspace to South Africa. We discussed political developments. He is also aware of the fact that following the developments of the last two months many African countries have resumed, or established for the first time, diplomatic relations with Israel. This process of forging diplomatic relations is continuing.

This was an extremely instructive visit for me. My first visit to the PRC and to Indonesia—albeit a brief time. I visited Singapore in 1966 as chief of staff. I would say that there is great openness in the world toward Israel. There are many political possibilities. And just as important, there are also many possibilities in the economic sphere, a thing which will strengthen Israel's economy.

I was accompanied on my visit by the Prime Minister's Office and Foreign Ministry staff, as well as by three economic representatives: Ya'aqov Frenkel, Bank of Israel governor, Dan Propper, chairman of the Manufacturers Association, and 'Imanu'el Gil, head of the Manufacturers Association electronics department. They held meetings in the PRC, Indonesia, and Singapore.

To sum up the visit: From my point of view it was an extremely edifying visit which demonstrated openness toward Israel. On the other hand, I saw these great Far East countries in a process of awakening and an impressive economic development. As far as Israel is concerned, this is the right time to create practical relations which will serve the mutual interests of Israel and each of the countries, mainly the largest country in the world—China.

[Qol Yisra'el's political correspondent Shlomo Raz] Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to ask you about the political negotiations. We have heard that the next round of Washington talks will be postponed. We have also heard statements by the Syrian foreign minister regarding difficulties and delays, and threats by Syria not to return to the political negotiations. We have also heard the U.S. secretary of state refer to the possibility of deploying American soldiers on the Golan Heights.

[Rabin] At this stage we are interested in preserving the Madrid framework, as determined in the Madrid conference and maintained in Washington. In the meeting between 'Arafat and his delegation and myself and the Israeli delegation in Cairo about 10 days ago we agreed on the following things: One, establishing an Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee. This committee met in Cairo last Wednesday. Two, establishing an Israeli-Palestinian negotiations committee for implementing the Gaza-Jericho First agreement. Three, to maintain the Israeli and Palestinian delegations in the framework of the Washington talks for discussing issues relating to the overall structure of the interim arrangement, including the makeup of the council for managing Palestinian affairs, its jurisdiction, the format of elections for this council and its number—because if there are elections they have to know exactly what they are electing. All these issues will be worked out in the framework of the Washington talks.

I know that there are signs of dissatisfaction on the part of other partners to the peace negotiations due to the fact that we have reached an agreement on an interim arrangement with the Palestinians, with the PLO. I have often said that the Madrid conference format, namely talks held by all the parties in one location for a limited period, is a format which has failed to bring about any Israeli-Arab agreement since the inception of the state. I am satisfied about the fact that there is a Palestinian-Israeli agreement which—in everything relating to the implementation of the interim arrangement—does not hinge on and is unrelated to progress or the lack thereof with other Arab partners. We came with the intention of reaching comprehensive peace. But comprehensive peace means bilateral peace with every Arab partner. We have reached a bilateral Israeli-Egyptian peace. We have an agreement with the Palestinians on an interim arrangement. In order to reach a comprehensive peace, future agreements must also include peace treaties between Jordan and Israel, Syria and Israel, and Lebanon and Israel. Every attempt to make progress in one area dependent on agreements with others is a recipe for stalemate and failure in our peace efforts.

[IDF Radio's Udi Segal] Mr. Prime Minister, when the Taba talks resume, will Israel have a clear answer regarding the release of Palestinian security prisoners? What numbers are we talking about here?

[Rabin] I do not want to conceal anything. We have reached an agreement with the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians on an interim arrangement. I am convinced that during the talks we will reach the issue of freeing prisoners and detainees and determining a policy regarding the fugitives. This must be done as part of the negotiations over the Gaza-Jericho First agreement. I will not enter into details on the criteria for releasing detainees and the date of release. This is an issue for and part of the negotiations. On our part, we will demand clearer information regarding the fate of the al-Sultan Ya'qub MIA's. I am referring to the fate of the soldiers Baumel, Katz, and Feldman. They were involved in a battle in which a Palestinian element participated. We will demand that the Palestinians give us all the information on what happened there.

[Israel Television's Menashe Raz] I want to ask you about the U.S. secretary of state's statement regarding the possibility of deploying American soldiers on the Golan Heights. Does Israel accept the possibility of deploying U.S. soldiers on the Golan as a security option following a possible withdrawal from the Golan Heights?

[Rabin] First, we have still not spoken with the Syrians about the substance of peace—that is, how the Syrians conceive peace. As long as we do not receive explicit and clear answers on the substance of peace we will not deal with other issues. I assume that the statement of the secretary of state came to calm and encourage Israeli elements regarding the security issue. We have not dealt with this issue, and therefore at this point I do not see any point in addressing this statement, other than saying that it expresses U.S. willingness to give Israel guarantees in case we reach peace with Syria and that this requires some sort of Israeli withdrawal on the Golan Heights.

[Raz] People were impressed by the good atmosphere which prevailed in the Taba talks last week. Do you share this impression?

[Rabin] I was not personally briefed by Major General Amnon Shahaq, who heads the team. I was briefed via telegrams. I am happy that this was the impression created. However, I do not want to voice my opinion before being fully briefed. I want to stress that up to this point, on the basis of my instructions, the only things concluded were the agenda, the issues to be negotiations, and the talks' format. I do not want to ignore the fact that when we reach the concrete issues, that is, all the things we consider vital for the security of the Gaza Strip, the role of the IDF, and other issues, I suppose we will have disagreements and ups and downs. We should remember that the test of the declaration of principles—which opened the gates and propelled the process a huge step forward—will be its translation into reality. For us the main issue is security. At the same time we will evince great willingness to enable the Palestinians run their own affairs without our intervention.

[Raz] Mr. Prime Minister, did you receive during your visit to the Far East any updated information regarding the fate of Ron Arad?

[Rabin] No, I have not received any information. Wherever I went—China, Indonesia, and Singapore—the issue of the Israeli MIA's and prisoners was raised. I do not want to say anything more on this issue.

Meeting With Kenyan President Detailed

TA1710200293 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Studio talk between anchor Hayim Yavin and reporter Dan Scemama who accompanied Prime Minister Rabin on his visits to China, Indonesia, and Kenya—live]

[Excerpt] [Yavin] Let us begin, Dan, with Mr. Rabin's meeting with the Kenyan president at the Nairobi airport last night. I understand the Kenyan president was the one who insisted on meeting him at 0100 in the morning.

[Scemama] He was very insistent. The prime minister tried to convey the message that it was late, perhaps some other time, but the Kenyan president insisted on holding the meeting. Let us ask our director to show the footage in which the prime minister is seen meeting Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi. [Video shows Rabin and Moi shaking hands, and then sitting down in armchairs.]

He wanted to meet with the prime minister because of his apprehensions about the recent events in Sudan. The Iranians have recently acquired growing influence in Sudan; Christians have rebelled in southern Sudan; there is an influx of thousands of refugees. In their private conversation, which lasted about an hour, the Kenyan president apparently asked Mr. Rabin for a certain assistance—perhaps for an appeal on his behalf to the Americans, whose help he seeks. [passage omitted]

Rabin, Peres Brief Cabinet on Respective Visits

TA1710120393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Report by Jack Katzenell]

[Text] The prime minister came to the cabinet meeting straight from Ben-Gurion Airport. It was an unusual cabinet meeting in that almost all those who spoke brought good news. The prime minister reported on his ground breaking visits to China and Indonesia, and his talks in Singapore and Kenya. Foreign Minister Peres reported on his talks with Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] in Cairo in the framework of the liaison committee with the PLO, and the deputy chief of staff, General Shahaq, reported on the first round of the Taba talks, in which an agenda was agreed upon on negotiations on autonomy in Gaza and Jericho.

Of course, the cabinet was briefed on Syria's threat not to attend the next round of the bilateral talks in Washington. Accusing Syria of not being serious about the negotiations, Minister Shim'on Shetrit retorted that it is Syria that is hosting the rejection front organizations, it is Syria that is preventing the Lebanese Army from deploying in south Lebanon to stop the Hizballah attacks, and it is Syria that refuses to spell out what it means by peace.

[Begin recording] [Shetrit] We want to expect them to say that they are for full normalization, full diplomatic relations, exchange of diplomatic relations, going down from the high level of talk regarding not to go along with the peace process as long as it is comprehensive and that everything is done with all the others. [sentence as heard] They have to go their own way and give us exactly what they mean by peace.

[Katzenell] The Arab League is about to meet in Damascus to extend the Arab boycott instead of reducing it, are you disappointed with the other Arab countries—with the Gulf states, with Tunisia, with the other participants—who are going to attend this meeting?

[Shetrit] I am very disappointed because we expect the Arab states and the Arab leaders to give us recognition in deeds and not only in general atmosphere that we are going to a new era of peace. An era of peace must mean that the Arab boycott has to be lifted and abolished, its primary and its second form. And the fact that they are now reconvening the Arab League to again talk the same old language is very disappointing for us. [end recording]

In the area of internal security, the news was not so good. The prime minister disclosed that the security services are checking evidence that the teenaged terrorist gang arrested in Sur Bahir outside Jerusalem is from the Fatah organization. This was the gang that planted the mine which blew off the foot of an Israeli. If it turns out that they are from Fatah this could have serious implications because, of course, Fatah is the main organization of the PLO, which is supposed to be maintaining a cease-fire, according to the promise given by Yasir 'Arafat to Prime Minister Rabin. If it turns out that the gang is indeed from Fatah then, of course, it will cause tension and be regarded as a setback in the implementation of the agreement.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 17 October adds that "the ministers are not concerned about the recent Syrian pronouncements." In a recorded passage, Police Minister Moshe Shahal says: "President al-Asad is a man who knows the art of negotiation, and of negotiating in the Middle East at that. Threats and ups and downs are part of the negotiating process. I nevertheless remain faithful to my assessment, almost from the word go, that an arrangement will be attained with Syria after we receive clear-cut answers. I believe this arrangement will begin to take shape toward the end of this year or the beginning of next year."]

PLO Said To Want Elections 'Soon as Possible'

TA1510095493 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 15 Oct 93 p 4

[Report by Amnon Barzilay and Washington correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Excerpt] The PLO leadership wants to hold elections in the territories as soon as possible, Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] told Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in their meeting in Cairo. Political sources in Jerusalem were surprised by this approach.

It is believed that in the talks scheduled to begin in Washington in early November, Israel and the PLO leadership will agree to discuss the modalities of the elections to the self-government. The exact date of the talks will be set during the visit of Dennis Ross, head of the U.S. peace team, who is due in Israel on 21 October. The United States wants to make sure that all the sides to the peace talks, including the Syrian delegation, arrive in Washington at the same time.

Yesterday, political sources in Jerusalem said they were taken by surprise by the Palestinian request to set up a committee that would immediately proceed to discuss the question of elections in the territories, seeing that the issue had been struck off the Israeli and Palestinian agenda in the Washington talks in recent months. Israel was under the impression that as a result of disagreements between the PLO leadership in Tunis and the local Palestinian leadership and in view of Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] growing strength, the Palestinians had lost all interest in holding elections in the territories.

Political sources in Jerusalem believe that the PLO leadership wants to take advantage of the strength supporters of the agreement with Israel have garnered in the Palestinian street in order to weaken the Islamic fundamentalists in the territories.

The PLO leadership wants Israel to set a date for the resumption of the peace talks in Washington regardless of developments on the other tracks of the talks. [passage omitted]

Beilin Comments on Negotiations With Palestinians

1948 Refugees 'Toughest Issue'

TA1510071793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Text] In an interview with our correspondent Gid'on Zelinger this morning, Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin said the future of the Palestinian refugees of 1948 will be discussed only in the framework of the talks on the permanent arrangement. This is the toughest issue in the negotiations, but both sides definitely understand each other's red lines, he said. In Beilin's opinion, the refugees of 1948 and their leaders do not believe that the negotiations to be conducted will enable them to return to sovereign Israel. He noted that the future of the Palestinians displaced in 1967, most of whom live in Jordan, has been discussed primarily with Jordan in the bilateral talks.

The deputy foreign minister said Israel will approve 2,000 applications for family reunifications every year. He believes that only a small number of refugees will ultimately return to Israel, as most of them are settled in Arab countries.

Permanent Arrangements Talks 'Desirable'

TA1710092993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin says that it is not only permissible to speak about the permanent arrangements with the Palestinians, but it is even extremely desirable to do so. In an interview with our correspondent Sheli Yehimovich, Beilin was reacting to accusation leveled by Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur, who said that Beilin should not have discussed the permanent arrangements with Yasir 'Arafat, and that in doing so he violated a clear directive issued by the prime minister.

The deputy foreign minister said he is not an official, but rather a political figure, and that even though the negotiations over the permanent arrangements will open in more than two years, there is nothing to prevent us from talking about it now.

Regarding the issue of the 1967 refugees, Yosi Beilin said that the issue of the refugees is a myth, and that many of them have already settled in Jordan and elsewhere. He added that when the real number of those who want to return is revealed, it will possibly transpire that the problem is much less serious than people think.

Referring to the negotiations with Syria, Beilin expressed the hope that Damascus understands that its rejectionism is self-defeating.

Palestinian State Dismissed as 'Dreams'

TA1710113793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin proposed to Yasir 'Arafat to establish another joint committee to deal with declarations made on the Palestinian issue. He asked 'Arafat to refrain from repeating the statement regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state, because this concept constitutes a threat as far as Israeli public opinion is concerned, and poses a problem for Israeli leaders. It is preferable to speak about practical issues rather than dreams. The deputy foreign minister proposes to speak with the PLO about an Israeli-Palestinian confederation. According to Beilin, the sides do not have substantial differences of opinion on this issue, in terms of the permanent arrangement. Beilin made these remarks in a speech at Bet Bern.

Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, who also spoke at Bet Bern, said that it is impossible to establish a confederation, which is a framework made up of states, without establishing a Palestinian state beforehand.

Gur Denies Autonomous Area To Include Jordan Valley

TA1710182793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Excerpts] Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur says the town of Ma'ale Adumim is part of greater Jerusalem. Visiting the town today, Gur denied that the autonomous area of Jericho will include large parts of the Jordan Valley. Mark Weiss reports:

[Begin recording] [Weiss] The town of Ma'ale Adumim lies east of Jerusalem on the road to Jericho. The proximity of the town to Jericho and the uncertainty over the borders of the autonomous area have led city officials to press the government for firm commitments for territorial continuity between Ma'ale Adumim and Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur made it clear during his visit that the government considers Ma'ale Adumim part of greater Jerusalem.

[Gur] Ma'ale Adumim, in our eyes, is part of Jerusalem. We have built Ma'ale Adumim with all its surroundings as a safety belt of Jerusalem toward the east. And, in that respect and in that framework, Ma'ale Adumim will be considered as part of Jerusalem.

[Weiss] Residents have spoken here today, have complained about a feeling of uncertainty. They don't know where the borders will be of the autonomous Jericho area, they don't know which Arab villages inside or outside. When will you be able to give them straight answers?

[Gur] Only after we start the negotiations and we present our position, that I have just specified. I cannot say today what will be the outcome of the talks. So, I am sure that during that time there will be all of kinds of speculations. But, I repeat only one thing: That in our eyes, Ma'ale Adumim is part of Jerusalem.

[Weiss] Gur said that there is no basis to the reports that the autonomous area of Jericho will include large parts of the Jordan Valley. [End recording]

IDF Striking Fatah Hawks Off Fugitive List

TA1510122593 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 15 Oct 93 p 5

[Report by Sulayman al-Shafa'i]

[Text] Brigadier General Yom-Tov Sami', commander of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops in the Gaza Strip, informed senior Fatah members in the Gaza Strip of his intention to strike the names of seven members of the Fatah Hawks from the IDF's list of wanted men.

This was announced yesterday by Tawfiq Abu-Husa and 'Abd-al-Tayif 'Ubayd, senior Fatah activists. According to them, Sami' met with them on 13 October at IDF headquarters in Gaza and gave them a list of seven wanted men who are members of the Fatah Hawks, Fatah's military arm.

The list names Khalil Zinu from Gaza; Samir al-Bur'i from the al-Shati' refugee camp; Zayyad Siyam al-Hasanat from Dayr al-Balah; 'Atif Kulab from Khan Yunus; Ahmad Zinu from Bayt Lahiyah; Ahmad Hasanayn from Rafah; and Ibrahim al-'Asali from Khan Yunus.

The two also said that Sami' promised them that this is the beginning of a larger list that will include fugitives from all the Palestinian factions in the Gaza Strip. According to them, the list will include people who have not committed murder.

The two added that Sami' did not mention the matter of the fugitives' handing over their guns to the IDF or anyone else.

Abu-Husa and al-Tayif asked Sami' for guarantees that the seven will not be harmed or detained by IDF soldiers, to which Sami' responded that al-Hasanat's ID card is being kept at the Civil Administration offices and, if he reports there, he will receive his card and go home unharmed.

Official military sources have refused to comment on this report.

5-Member 'Terrorists' Cell Uncovered in Jerusalem

TA1410204193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] The security services have uncovered a gang of terrorists from the village of Sur Bahir near Jerusalem. Two are suspected of planting a mine near the Bell Post memorial several weeks ago. Five Israelis were wounded, and one man had his leg amputated, in the incident. Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that the cell was made up of five youths, aged 16, who used to dismantle mines found in the area from earlier battles in order to make explosives. Six months ago they hurled two explosives charges at a house in the Arnona neighborhood in south Jerusalem but they failed to explode.

Arabic Service 'Political Broadcasts' Halted

NC1810093793 Paris AFP in English 0905 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] Jerusalem, Oct 18 (AFP)—Israel's state-run radio has halted all "political broadcasts" in its Arabic service, which has a wide audience in the Middle East, following the Palestinian autonomy deal, a spokesman told AFP on Monday [18 October].

"We stopped broadcasting a few days ago the political comment in which we explained Israel's views following our news bulletin," Israel Broadcasting Authority [IBA] spokesman Tzvi Lidar said.

"The new regional context means such broadcasts are no longer necessary," he added, referring to the September 13 autonomy accord.

IBA director general Mordekhay Kirschenbaum said: "Israel radio in Arabic must be credible and not be the voice of this or that body."

The Arabic service transmits 18.5 hours daily and had eight staff in the "political information" section.

Ninety percent of the 750,000 Arabs living inside Israel listen at least once a week to the Arabic service, which began with the foundation of the state in 1948.

In Syria, 30 percent of the population tune in, 24 percent in Jordan and 14 percent in Egypt, according to IBA surveys.

King, Prince Hasan Receive PLO's Mahmud 'Abbas

JN1610162393 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Today, His Majesty King Husayn received PLO Executive Committee Member Mahmud 'Abbas at the Royal Hashemite Court. They discussed various regional and bilateral affairs and the latest developments, particularly those relating to the peace process.

The meeting was attended by al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, and the Palestinian ambassador in Amman.

Mr. 'Abbas was also received today by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan at the Royal Hashemite Court. 'Abbas briefed his highness on the latest Palestinian developments and the progress of political talks following the PLO Central Council's ratification of the 13 September agreement.

The meeting was attended by Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for cabinet affairs.

'Abbas on Withdrawal From Gaza, Jericho

JN1610192793 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 Oct 93

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The meeting was attended by Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for cabinet affairs.

Our political affairs correspondent met with Mahmud 'Abbas, who spoke about these two meetings and a number of other issues.

[Begin recording] ['Abbas] Discussion centered on the following issues: First, the Palestinian-Israeli agreement and its implementation, as well as the committees charged with its implementation that are convening at various places. Second, Jordanian-Palestinian coordination and the committees that were formed in the past, some of which have already started to work, while others are still at the beginning. The third point concerned the our meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in Cairo.

[Jordan television Correspondent Kassab Samawi] Sir, there is some talk about the possibility of restructuring the joint Jordanian-Palestinian coordination committees and activating their role. Are there any new developments in this regard?

['Abbas] Undoubtedly, these committees are very important as far as we are concerned. Some of the these committees started work a long time ago. We knew why we set up these committees: For full Jordanian-Palestinian coordination during the transitional Palestinian rule and to develop a common Jordanian-Palestinian position on the various issues during the transitional phase. Indeed, certain committees have started work. We are now trying to activate the other committees, particularly the economic committee which recently concluded its work and presented a draft of what I think is a good plan. We hope both parties will approve that plan so it will become the basis from which we can proceed to the world.

[Samawi] Have you settled the issue of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho? There is a clear contradiction in the Israeli officials' statements on the nature and dimensions of that withdrawal?

['Abbas] In Gaza, withdrawal means from all areas, except when it comes to the protection of settlements. The protection of settlements, and settlements, will remain in the Israelis' hands. Of course, we have not agreed on the dismantling of settlements because the settlements issue will be discussed during the final phase discussions. But genuine Israeli withdrawal will take place from all other areas. There will also be a genuine withdrawal from the entire area of Jericho, which will be agreed. We did not speak about the Jericho town but about the Jericho area. The word "area" has to be specified, how many square kilometers? What is the size of that area? Consequently, there will be a withdrawal from that entire area. [end recording]

Al-Majali Interviewed on Peace Process

NC1610094593 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Telephone interview with Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al- Salam al-Majali, in Amman, by Ramadan Husayn, in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Husayn] Mr. Prime Minister, the Middle East peace process has undoubtedly arrived at a serious juncture, which will certainly affect the regional map and the future balance of power there. How do you see the climate of the peace process after the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles and the Jordanian-Israeli agenda, and in light of expected developments in other Arab-Israeli negotiating tracks?

[Al-Majali] I do not know whether serious juncture is an accurate description of the stage we are going through or not. The stage is undoubtedly full of surprises. We hope these surprises will always be in the interest of all people in the region. The future certainly depends considerably on the Israeli side and its flexibility in removing obstacles from the road to peace. I believe that the Arab side is open minded and very interested in peace. The Israeli side, however, still questions the Arab side's real desire to achieve peace. We hope that the Israelis are sufficiently convinced and that all obstacles will be removed from the peace course so that the process can proceed smoothly toward a stage of freedom, safety, security, and peace for all peoples in the region.

[Husayn] Dennis Ross, the U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace process, will arrive in the region soon and will visit Amman. What will you discuss with Mr. Ross and how do you view the next round?

[Al-Majali] We want to know what has been accomplished between brother Palestinians and Israel on the various issues involved and the U.S. stand on them. The second thing we want to know is the Israeli stand on the Jordanian issues included on the agenda and the U.S. position on them. Moreover, we want to cement American- Jordanian relations. Since the outset, Jordan has not ceased to call for peace. Fortunately, the train of peace has started to move at a good speed. If the American party maintains its serious attitude in pushing the process forward, the train will reach its destination soon.

[Husayn] After the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, all eyes are now focused on Palestinian- Jordanian relations. How do you view these relations and do you have any fears concerning the stage following the establishment of the Palestinian self-government authority in the occupied territories?

[Al-Majali] I have no fears whatsoever. However, we are careful to avoid anything that might harm us. Jordanian-Palestinian relations are strong, close, deep, and long-standing. We hope they will be further consolidated in the future.

[Husayn] Some fear the entanglement of future economic relations in the region. They think the stage might mark the beginning of Israeli economic control of the Middle East. What do you say to this?

[Al-Majali] We will have clear talks with the Palestinian brothers to understand the real situation. We will give the Palestinian brothers the necessary advice to guarantee that these relations will be sound, reasonable, and acceptable and that they will not harm either side.

[Husayn] Do you believe that the Palestinian side will encounter serious problems from the Palestinian opposition within and outside the occupied territories when they start to exercise the self-government authority?

[Al-Majali] It is undoubtedly regrettable that instead of dedicating efforts to clarify some vague aspects of problems.... [changes thought] The opposition must be capable of clarifying the other aspects that responsible officials may fail to see to help them make better decisions, instead of destroying the decisions the officials make. I believe that the Palestinian brothers are capable of restraining themselves and of dedicating opposition activity to further clarifying the vague aspects of the agreement to the Palestinian leadership to enable it to achieve success in the future. The future will not be easy. The Palestinian leadership lacks the administrative ability needed to run a state. This is not an easy task; it requires ability, time, and consolidated efforts by all concerned to enable the leadership to begin building the Palestinian state.

[Husayn] Will you offer assistance to the Palestinians in this matter?

[Al-Majali] We are wholeheartedly standing by their side and will provide them with all that they need.

[Husayn] There is another issue concerning the Jordanian- Israeli agenda. Are there steps to implement it or specific issues to be discussed with the Israeli side during or before the next round of talks?

[Al-Majali] when the American coordinator arrives we will discuss this matter with him. We will learn about the Israeli stand from him. We will know the mechanism to be applied in the next round, we will know whether the old approach will be pursued or if new formulas will be applied after the signing of the Palestinian- Israeli agreement. Of course, we are seriously interested in the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks. We believe in comprehensive peace. We believe that progress should be made on these tracks to reach comprehensive rather than unilateral peace.

[Husayn] There are demands to lift the Arab boycott of Israel. How do you view this matter?

[Al-Majali] I believe that once outstanding issues are resolved with Israel—once Arab lands, rights, and waters are returned and the Palestinian rights are restored—there will be no need whatsoever for a boycott. The situation will be normal. The current situation was in reaction to other actions. Once the cause is eliminated, the effect will naturally disappear.

[Husayn] Do you believe that the Arabs are prepared for such expected developments?

[Al-Majali] I think that they are fully prepared to regain their rights. Once this happens, relations will be normal.

[Husayn] Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister.

[Al-Majali] Thank you, brother.

Abu-Nuwar on Hasan-Peres Meeting, Other Issues

JN1410185693 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1725 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Text] Amman, 14 Oct (SANA)—Jordanian Information Minister Dr. Ma'n Abu-Nuwar has stated that preparations for the meeting held between Jordanian Crown Prince Hasan and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on

Peres at the U.S. White House were made in 24 hours, and that this meeting was not planned.

In a meeting with Arab and foreign news agency and newspaper reporters today, Dr. Abu-Nuwar said that as far as he knew the direct Jordanian-Israeli meetings were only confined to the meeting between the head of the Jordanian delegation to the multilateral negotiations and his Israeli counterpart. He said he had no information on future direct meetings between Jordanian and Israeli officials.

Asked whether the meeting between Prince Hasan and Peres would lift the ban on holding Israeli-Jordanian meetings outside the framework of negotiations if Israel demands such meetings, Dr. Abu- Nuwar said that Israel did not request such meetings. However, should there be any need for such meetings there would be nothing to obstruct them. If Jordan finds that meeting with Israeli officials would regain a specific right, it would not be embarrassed to meet with them. However, there is no need to do so now, he added.

Abu-Nuwar denied the rumors about a cabinet reshuffle in Jordan, indicating that such rumors were circulated by those who wish this. Discussing the region's future in the 21st century, he said that for more than 20 years Jordan has been making efforts to achieve peace in this region which will become a new Middle East region, thus pointing to the future prospects if peace is achieved.

Abu-Nuwar indicated that the source for future instability in the region could be the great differences between the rich oil-exporting countries and the poor countries, or even the economic differences between the fellow citizens of the same country, or the failure to establish a Palestinian state, or the failure to regain Jerusalem, or extremism, adding that all these things may impede peace and the stability we want.

Abu-Nuwar stated that the legislative elections in Jordan will be held as scheduled on 8 November, and that the government has taken all necessary preparations for smooth and honest elections throughout the kingdom. He criticized the few people who take advantage of the freedom of the press and write untrue reports, particularly in party newspapers. If they do not refrain from doing so, they would harm themselves first and foremost, he added.

Foreign Minister on Palestine Issue, Arab Ties

PM1510151193 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 15 Oct 93 p 34

[Interview with Talal al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, by Usamah 'Ajjaj in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] ['Ajjaj] Can you provide us with an explanation for Jordan's attempt to play down the importance of what was agreed with Israel in relation to the agenda? Is this attributable to special balances or sensitivities?

[Al-Hasan] It is not attributable to one or the other. What was agreed with Israel is an agenda. It is, for example, neither an agreement nor a declaration of principles. It is an agenda of issues to be negotiated. So there was no need for all that fuss. Actually we have not yet reached the end of the road. We are just at the beginning of it. This is why we were eager to put things in their context and reveal their scale, so as to match what has been achieved.

['Ajjaj] Is Jordan willing to accept the 1948 refugees in particular, especially as the Palestinian-Israeli agreement grants the right of return to the 1967 refugees only?

[Al-Hasan] The refugee issue is one of the important and main issues included on the agenda approved by the Jordanian and Israeli sides. It will require deep discussion between the two sides. It is one of the main issues of interest to Jordan because it has received huge numbers of refugees and emigrants, and in this refugee issue the humanitarian dimension has been taken account of. Jordan will deal with the matter very eagerly and seriously within the framework of the negotiations. [passage omitted]

['Ajjaj] The confederation option is one of the options proposed to the Palestinian side to formulate a future relationship with Jordan. Do you believe the time is right to discuss this issue?

[Al-Hasan] Now is not the time to discuss the confederation issue because it will not be discussed until after the Palestinian people obtain their right to self-determination, so that the Jordanian and the Palestinian peoples can voluntarily choose the shape of the future relationship. We emphasize the special and distinct relationship between the two peoples. It is ties of history and kinship. But discussion of the issue must take place after the Palestinian people have obtained their right to self-determination and possess the freedom of decisionmaking.

['Ajjaj] Can we say that Jordan has overcome the effects of the Gulf War and succeeded in repairing its relations with the Gulf states?

[Al-Hasan] We have surmounted the effects of the crisis. However, some of its effects are still there, especially at the economic level, including the impact of the return of 400,000 Jordanians who were working in the Gulf region. This issue has had a negative impact on the infrastructure in Jordan. And we are still suffering from the restrictions imposed on export operations and trade. However, Jordan—under the leadership of His Majesty King Husayn and with the help of the people's sons—has been able to surmount this crisis. We are withstanding the suffering patiently. And on the whole we have been able to resist the huge negative effects of the Gulf crisis. ['Ajjaj] And what about normal relations with the Gulf states?

[Al-Hasan] We aspire to establish real Arab solidarity and Arab reconciliation by means of which to make breakthroughs, not only in Jordan but elsewhere as well, in order to restore cohesion to the Arab nation and restore the previous era of harmony and amity to the

Arab homeland. We in Jordan look to our brothers in the Gulf with an open heart, open mind, and extended hand, hoping that normal relations will be restored among the Arab states and Arab solidarity achieved.

['Ajjaj] It seems that Israel and numerous other quarters are expecting and seeking an Arab step toward the lifting of the Arab boycott of Israel. Does Jordan support such a step?

[Al-Hasan] We believe that that decision does not concern one state or one quarter in particular. It concerns all the Arab states in accordance with resolutions adopted by the Arab League with the unanimity of all the Arab states. So the matter concerns the Arab League Council, which should decide on this matter, taking into consideration the fact that there should be Arab unanimity over this step. However, I believe that it is still too early to discuss a matter like this, [which should be deferred] until a comprehensive and lasting peace has been achieved in the region. [passage omitted]

Jordan Said Ready To Host Arms Control Talks

TA1210134893 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 12 Oct 93 p 4

[Report by Amnon Barzilay]

[Excerpt] Jordan has informed the United States it wants the working group on arms control to hold its session in Amman next month, and that it is inviting Israel to participate in the committee discussions, to be held in the framework of the multilateral talks.

The Israeli committee for arms control is headed by David 'Ivri, director general of the Defense Ministry, and Eytan Bentzur, deputy director general of the Foreign Ministry. The presence of the two in Amman could be construed as de facto establishment of relations with Jordan.

The Israeli Embassy in Washington has recently reported to the Foreign Ministry about the Jordanian initiative. The U.S. Government has already expressed support for the Jordanian move.

The arms control talks were slated to take place in Moscow during November. The Jordanian proposal was submitted to the United States via Jordan's ambassador in the United States before the abortive coup attempt in Russia.

Political sources in Jerusalem yesterday did not rule out the possibility that the working group will convene in Moscow after all. It is possible that Russian President Boris Yeltsin will be interested in holding the discussions in Moscow as an indication of business as usual in Russia. In this case the meeting in Jordan will be held only early next year. It has been learned that Morocco has also expressed willingness to host the arms control talks. [passage omitted]

Prince Urges Financial Aid to Meet Peace 'Commitments'

JN1310174193 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 13 Oct 93

[Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan has called for finding radical solutions for the social, political, and economic problems which the region has been suffering from for decades.

The crown prince said national security, economic and industrial development, as well as construction, water, refugees, and environment are all issues of deep concern, which dictate a comprehensive and collective solution. He said that achieving a just, comprehensive, and durable peace in the region could not be realized in a short period.

This came in a speech delivered in his name by Minister of Trade and Industry Bassam al-Sakit at a conference on Lebanese industry and international Arab industrial cooperation in Beirut today.

He said that the Arab countries need financial aid to meet with political and economic commitments which have arisen from the peace process. He said that states in the region would compete for attracting foreign investment, adding that the region would highly benefit from development projects emerging from any sound, encouraging, and equitable regional new order.

Israeli Ruling on al-Aqsa Mosque Criticized

JN1310213993 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 13 Oct 93

[Text] The Islamic-Christian Commission has denounced a ruling by the Israeli Supreme Court which said the holy al-Aqsa Mosque is part of the land of Israel and is thus subject to Israel's laws and legislations.

In a statement issued today, the Commission urged the world Islamic and Christian religious bodies to denounce this ruling. It emphasized the rights of the authorities responsible for the Islamic trusts and reconstruction works in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as well as their role in supervising, maintaining, and safeguarding the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque. Copies of this statement were sent to the UN secretary general, the UN Security Council's president, the Arab League's secretary general, the Islamic Conference Organization's secretary general, and the head of the World council for call and relief.

Al-Hirawi Says No Peace Without Syria, Lebanon

NC1610115393 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0955 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Speech by President Ilyas al-Hirawi at the inauguration of the arts and science faculty at al-Balamand University in north Lebanon—live]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Your beatitude, dear friends: We will not cede one iota of our national soil. [applause] We will not bargain over our sovereignty and independence. They are talking about separate and unilateral solutions. Why do they not hasten to implement the UN resolutions? Lebanon, Syria, and the Arab brothers entered the negotiations together. Let anyone who wants to break ranks do so. Whatever they do they will not be able to make peace without Lebanon and Syria. [applause] Also, they will not be able to make peace at the expense of Lebanon and Syria.

Wars have pushed many groups inside Lebanon to make themselves the issue. Lebanon is the issue for all of us, Lebanon the homeland and the citizen. We will say no to violence and extremism from now on. We will say no to one-upmanship and retreat. We will forge ahead so that everyone can move forward in the interests of all. Our internal unity will fortify our national rights and our solidarity with fraternal Syria will safeguard our Arab dignity. Our path is difficult because the burdens of the past are heavy. Do not fall prey to despair. O youths: We are removing the effects of the war from the country for you. We are confident that we will win because our country is rich in its men. [passage omitted]

Al-Hariri Views Peace Issues During Visit to France

Stresses Need for 'Just' Peace

NC1710182693 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has affirmed the importance of national unity among the Lebanese, considering it the first and last line of defense of national destiny. It is the essence of independence, sovereignty, and future. It protects Lebanon's role in the midst of major changes. It expresses solidarity and participation in decision making and in upholding justice and equality. It is the political manifestation of coexistence, cooperation, and participation in the march of development and reconstruction.

Prime Minister al-Hariri said the current phase makes it incumbent on us to rise to the level of big responsibilities and to shun trivialities. He said no one can erase Lebanon from the landscape of the region if the Lebanese rally to protect their homeland.

Prime Minister al-Hariri said: We want a just and comprehensive regional peace that does not conflict with our Lebanese national peace, that upholds our full sovereignty on our territory, now and in the future, and that is not used to destroy our national unity.

He reaffirmed that the Lebanese government rejects making Lebanon a homeland for the Palestinians who were uprooted from their land. He stressed that their return and the search for an appropriate solution for them remain the responsibility of the whole world. He said that any booby-trapped [mufakhkhakh] peace at this particular phase might harm us, or harm Syria and our strategic relations with it.

Prime Minister al-Hariri was speaking at a dinner held by the Lebanese community in Paris last night.

Discusses Syrian Withdrawal

NC1810073793 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri will end his visit to France tomorrow following talks with French officials, which will be crowned with the signing of protocols covering cultural, scientific, technical, and banking cooperation.

Al-Hariri is due to meet the French economy and interior ministers and the mayor of Paris today.

In an interview with French television last night, al-Hariri said Lebanon is ready to sign an agreement with Israel regarding the withdrawal of its forces from the south. But it is not ready to sign a separate peace agreement, because Syrian and Lebanese national interests are connected.

Asked about the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon, al-Hariri said everything depends on the readiness of the Lebanese Army and security forces to take over. They are not ready. So, we asked the French to help us equip our security forces and train our officers in France. He said that when the legitimate Lebanese authority can establish security with its own forces, the Syrians will withdraw. We discussed this issue with them and they are ready to do it.

On the Palestinians, al-Hariri said 300,000 Palestinians are present in Lebanon. He said: We cannot give them Lebanese nationality. We asked the Americans and Israelis to solve their situation.

In a press interview today, al-Hariri declined to comment on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's call for separate negotiations with Lebanon and Syria. He said: The Lebanese position is firm and unchanged. There is no room for media debate about the issue. He said Lebanon will await developments and the results of the tour of the region by Dennis Ross, the U.S. peace process coordinator. Lebanon's position is clear. The Americans and all parties know our demands and position, he said.

Further Reportage on French Visit

WA2903163493

For further reportage on the official visit to France by Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, see the French section of the 18 October West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Deputy Premier Leaves for Talks in Damascus

NC1610091993 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Michel al-Murr left for Damascus this morning. He is scheduled to meet with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and other senior Syrian officials. He will return to Beirut this evening.

Iraqi Consent to Peace Accord Seen as Essential

JN1810091093 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 18 Oct 93 p 1

[Report by Faysal al-Shubul]

[Text] High-ranking Arab diplomatic sources have disclosed that Syria has set a condition for the United States before signing any agreement with Israel. The condition is ensuring Iraq's consent to the peace process.

The same sources added that Syria does not want to sign any agreement with Israel before guaranteeing the consent of all Arab countries, without exception—a clear reference to Iraq. Syria fears Iraq's one-upmanship in the future if it signs an agreement with Israel while Iraq continues to oppose the peace process.

The sources added that, in addition to this, the Syrians fear that in the future an ideological situation would emerge out of the contradiction between the two ruling wings of the Ba'th Party in the two countries. The sources also added that the Syrians are aware that their call for Iraq's agreement means a possible deal between Washington and Baghdad through which the lifting of the blockade would be the price. This stand also means that, for the first time, the Syrians are calling for lifting the blockade that has been imposed on Iraq for more than three years.

The sources expect the deal to be concluded at the beginning of next year following a new round of bilateral talks scheduled to be held at the end of November.

Syria 'Cannot Tolerate' Talks Based on Gaza-Jericho

JN1710155993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Many questions are being asked about the possibility of a new round of Middle East peace negotiations. Questions are also being asked about the future of coordination among Arab parties after the Gaza-Jericho agreement created a gap in this coordination. The fact is that the issues of holding another round of negotiations and Arab coordination are closely linked to each other. Everyone knows that each round of negotiations in Washington was preceded by coordination meetings among the Arab foreign ministers concerned with the peace process. Bilateral meetings on higher levels were also held, not just to agree on a date for the next round but to prepare a plan for Arab action during the proposed round and the way to confront the Israeli maneuvers that always obstructed progress in each of the past 11 rounds. The main purpose behind unifying action among the Arab negotiating parties was to ensure the achievement of a comprehensive solution that secures the restoration of Arab rights and establishment of peace based on the Madrid formula.

However, the current gap in this coordination—created after the Gaza-Jericho agreement and after Israel gave preference to implementing this agreement over making progress on the other tracks of negotiations—continues to raise a question about the usefulness of the previous formula of Arab coordination that preceded the past rounds. If previous coordination, despite all the manifestations of concern and adherence by various Arab parties, did not prevent an Arab party from violating it in a way that damages other Arab parties as well as that one particular Arab party, then what is the point in coordination based on previous formulas?

Yesterday, through its prime minister, Israel said the Gaza-Jericho agreement has nothing to do with the other negotiating tracks. At every opportunity, Rabin's government says it wants to take it easy and wait until this agreement is implemented before moving on to the other tracks. It says it is currently concerned about ways to reap political benefits before achieving a comprehensive peace.

So, if a new round is held, even if all the Arab parties take part in it, and even if this round is preceded by a bogus Arab coordination meeting, its true substance will be merely the provision of Arab cover for continuing negotiations to implement the partial agreement.

From this premise, Arab coordination could and should take place, but only among parties that are still committed to the Madrid formula and to the bases of the peace process, and who are not committed to the partial solution formula. A new round should be preceded by a clear Israeli commitment to the original formula on which the peace process was based, that is, the Madrid formula. There should be a clear Israeli commitment to the bases of this process, which is founded on UN Resolutions 242 and 338 and the land-for-peace equation.

Syria cannot tolerate the conversion of the negotiations in Washington into Arab cover for the peddling of partial deals that contradict the spirit, basis, and principle of the just and comprehensive peace on which the Madrid formula is based. True, Syria has said it neither supports nor rejects the Gaza-Jericho agreement. However, it cannot agree to turning this agreement into an alternative formula to the one adopted in Madrid. From here comes Syria's reaffirmation, through Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', that before it agrees to take part in any round, Israel should show seriousness about achieving peace founded on the bases to which all parties, including the cosponsors of the peace process, are committed.

Syria will reaffirm its concern about the peace process until it achieves its desired objective. It pins great hopes on the role of the U.S. cosponsor and the efforts of its envoys to push this process forward, especially on the remaining tracks, that is, the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, in accordance with the bases of this process and the land-for-peace principle.

Commentary Views PLO 'Concessions, Humiliation'

JN1410172293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1238 GMT 14 Oct 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: To learn more about the Israeli negotiating mentality, it may be useful to look at the current Israeli way of holding negotiations on the Gaza-Jericho agreement. This is an attempt to make a close study of the Israeli logic in the negotiations designed to work out an agreement, which, according to the Israeli concept, is the first step toward peace.

We begin by citing some points highlighted in yesterday's meeting between the two parties concerned with the agreement. The first concern of the Israelis is to guarantee the settlers' security in the territory on which the agreement will be implemented under a supposedly Palestinian sovereignty. The second concern of the Israelis is to guarantee the security of the Palestinians who have thus far collaborated with the occupation authorities since the very beginning of occupation.

A third point, which we should contemplate, is the Israeli condition that there should be no one among the Palestinian negotiators whose hands were stained with Israeli blood, and the acceptance by the Palestinian delegation's leadership to withdraw one or more members from this delegation for his terrorist record against the Israelis, according to the Israeli expression.

But Palestinian security is something which can be discussed later. There is no room to urge Israel, even by way of showing a goodwill gesture, to release thousands of Palestinian detainees at a time when the agreement should supposedly contribute to their release. This is because the current time does not allow such initiatives, now that the negotiations have already begun, so anything that the Palestinians may demand now can be negotiated. However, the Israeli concerns we have indicated cannot be negotiated, and should supposedly be taken for granted, so negotiations would only be held on the Palestinian demands.

The need for clearing the Palestinian negotiating delegation of anyone who may have a terrorist record against the Israelis does not simultaneously commit Israel to clear its own delegation on the same basis. Perhaps, the Israeli delegation, led by the deputy chief of staff, does not include anyone whose hands were ever sinful and stained with innocent Arab blood. Likewise, no Israeli may be considered guilty of illegally killing an Arab, now that the other party has bestowed legitimacy on Israel's existence, conduct, and practices. Such a position is extremely serious, and it is a precedent for the Palestinians and all other Arabs to acknowledge that the hand of any Arab is sinful and that the hand of any Israeli is free of both sin and aggression against Arabs, particularly the Palestinians.

Does anyone accepting such a precedent realize its consequences, not on this generation but on the coming Arab generations? Do they not fear a day when the Israelis—after they have gained the legitimacy they sought in terms of their existence and history on this land—may demand that coming Arab and Palestinian generations atone for their alleged sins against the Israelis?

Is it an exaggeration to imagine that the masters of world Zionism—who still blackmail the current German generations for the accusations leveled against Nazism during World War II for what it did against the Jews—may some day advocate a theory to the effect that in the wake of revealing the fact that all the Israeli wars were legitimate and defensive ones, and that after canceling the UN resolutions condemning the Israeli aggressiveness—in case they have already been canceled through Arab and international collusion—Israel will have the right to demand that Arabs pay compensation for the Israeli material and human losses during the Israeli-Arab wars?

Does this seem a kind of delusion? Will we wait for the coming days to confirm the truth of such expectations? Or will we rather begin now to restore cohesion to ourselves and to our position, and adhere to our legitimate rights to our territories, history, and struggle? Should we not reject any attempt to falsify both this history and the legitimacy of this struggle which was waged only for the sake of justice? No one can ever discredit this legitimacy, which is a right for all peoples suffering from occupation or from usurpation of any part of their land or any of their rights.

There are limits for concessions and humiliation. Nothing can justify the relinquishment of one's legitimate struggle in order to appease his enemy. By abandoning struggle, one would have relinquished all that links him to this land, to the history of this land, and to the legitimacy of his presence on it.

India

'Militants' Occupy Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar

BK1610162793 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] In Srinagar, precautionary curfew in seven police station areas of the old city continues since early this morning. About 50 militants, who have taken shelter inside the Hazratbal shrine, have been firing on the security forces surrounding the area. A civilian was killed in the firing. In a bid to escape, militants set on fire a structure which is some distance away from the shrine, but the security forces foiled their attempts. Appeals are being made on mikes to the militants to surrender. The Jammu and Kashmir government has made it clear that the Hazratbal shrine and the holy relic of Prophet Muhammad there are safe. The security forces have foiled the militants attempt to harm the holy relic. Two locks of the outer door of the saferoom of the shrine were found replaced yesterday. The management of the shrine later carried out a search and informed that the inner door lock was intact and the holy relic inside was safe. The government has urged the people to remain calm and give no credence to rumours. The (?state government) secretary, Mr. Zafar Saifullah, has arrived in Srinagar today on a two-day visit. He will meet the state governor and senior officers and review the latest developments in the state.

Meanwhile, a top militant, Abdul Majid Mir alias Khalid Jibran, was killed along with five other militants in an encounter with security at Nihama in Handwara area of Kupwara District yesterday. He was a self-styled commander-in-chief of the banned outfit Al- burq. In another encounter, three militants were killed and four arrested at (Khutanwarq Bulbull) in Naugam area of Anantnag District.

Officials Discuss Siege 17 Oct

BK1710075893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] In Srinagar, a meeting of the senior officers of the state government and the security forces today reviewed the situation arising out of the aborted conspiracy by militants to harm the Hazratbal Shrine and the holy relic of Prophet Mohammad kept there. The meeting expressed the satisfaction that the shrine as well as the holy relic are safe.

Meanwhile, the security forces continue to surround the Hazratbal Shrine. Appeals are being made on loudspeakers to the militants hiding in the shrine to surrender. The government has appealed to the people to remain and not to give credence to rumors. Precautionary curfew continues in seven police station areas of the old city on the second day today.

Negotiations With Government Detailed

BK1710163693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir government has established contact will the militants hiding inside the Hazratbal shrine. AIR's [All India Radio's] Srinagar correspondent, Ajit Singh reports:

[Begin Singh recording] Two rounds of negotiations were held today between the militants and some state government officers standing about 10 feet away on either sides of the wall of the shrine complex. Government is persuading the militants to surrender and have promised that only action under the law would be taken. Militants have demanded withdrawal of the security forces surrounding the shrine. I have visited the shrine complex along with some media men and saw some militants carrying sophisticated weapons. They had taken position inside the marble domed shrine when two talked to the state officers. The militants said that they had planted explosives in the shrine complex. Security officers told newsmen that there was no firing from either side today. Additional chief secretary in charge home, Mr. Mahmudur Rahman told newsmen that government has taken firm measures to avoid sacrilege of the Hazratbal shrine by the militants. He made it clear that the shrine as well as the holy relic of Hazrat Muhammad there are totally safe. [end recording]

Meanwhile, the curfew in seven police station areas of all Srinagar city continues. No incident has been reported from anywhere. Life in other parts of the valley is also normal. The state governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, visited the area around the Hazratbal shrine this afternoon. The governor has appealed to the people not to believe the rumours being spread by vested interests.

The home minister Mr. S.B. Chavan, has said that there was a clear conspiracy to damage the Hazratbal shrine and the state government has prevented it by timely action. Talking to All India Radio, he said:

[Begin Chavan recording] The government of Jammu and Kashmir promptly took several precautionary steps such as deployment of security forces to cordon off the area from the evening of 15th of October. This helped in foiling the miscreants to damage the shrine and tamper with the holy relic of the prophet. The security forces have shown a considerable restraint despite provocations from the other side which includes firing at the security forces. The state government has established contact with the miscreants inside the shrine and has appealed to them to come out and surrender. The state government will continue its efforts to prevent the misguided people inside the shrine from carrying out their unholy design and to maintain public order. It is a matter of serious concern and deep regret that in their attempt to destabilize the Kashmir valley, the militants and terrorist elements have been descended to desecrate a place of worship. Our appeal to other people everywhere, especially to the people of

Jammu and Kashmir to extend their support to the government in protecting the sacred place of worship and the holy relic. I would also appeal to you all to maintain peace and calm and not to give ear to rumours and false propaganda. The central government is closely in touch with the state government and is monitoring the situation. [end reording]

The national conference leader, Professor Saifuddin (Souz) has appealed to the militants to leave the shrine and maintain its sanctity. In a statement issued in New Delhi today, he also urged the state government not to send the security forces inside the shrine in the interest of peace and harmony.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has demanded that the government should come out with an action plan against the militants in Jammu and Kashmir. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. K.L. Sharma, also demanded an inquiry into what he called the failure of the security forces to prevent the militants from entering the shrine.

Threat To Destroy Shrine Issued

BK1710125493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1207 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Report by Surinder Oberoi]

[Text] Srinagar, India, Oct 17 (AFP)—Kashmiri Moslem militants holed up inside a mosque here for the past two days threatened on Sunday to blow up the shrine if the thousands of Indian troops encircling the complex launched an assault.

The threat to destroy Kashmir's holiest Islamic shrine was conveyed to Wajahat Habibullah, a senior Kashmir official who held a face-to-face meeting with the militants inside the complex, officials said.

As the siege of the Hazratbal shrine on the outskirts of Srinagar entered a second day with no sign of a breakthrough, 11 Moslem separatists were killed by security forces in the border town of Bandipora in an unrelated gunbattle.

Neighbouring Pakistan, which disputes Kashmir's 1947 accession to India, condemned the siege meanwhile as an example of India's "callous disregard for the religious sentiments" of Kashmiri Moslems.

The rebels in the shrine defied calls for an unconditional surrender, demanding that the authorities permit them to hand over a holy relic preserved in the complex to Moslem clergymen and the "general masses," officials said.

They also demanded the lifting of a curfew clamped in Srinagar so residents could make their way to the shrine to take possession of the relic, a single hair that Moslems believe comes from the beard of the Prophet Mohammad.

Habibullah met with the militants, estimates of whose number ranged from between 50 and 100, inside the white-marble complex on the banks of Nagin lake.

The militants told him they had planted explosives which would blow up the complex if the army tried to storm the shrine, officials said, adding that the government was reviewing the situation.

Another meeting was expected later Sunday, the officials said, ruling out safe passage for the militants. The law would take its course, they said.

The estimated 10,000 army and paramilitary troops surrounding the shrine were joined Sunday by elite "Black Cat" commandos amid tension in the valley, where a general strike crippled normal life.

The head priest of Hazratbal, Moulvi Bashir Farooqui, called on Moslems to observe three days of "mourning" to show their anger at the military action.

Mirwaiz Moulvi Umar Farooq, the region's leading religious figure, urged Kashmiris not to open shops or businesses until the army lifted the siege.

A fire Saturday razed a prayer hall in the complex but the authorities stressed that the Prophet's hair was safe and ruled out a storming of the complex "as of now."

"We are doing everything we can to preserve and maintain the sanctity of the shrine," Kashmir administration spokesman Mehboob ur Rehman told reporters.

"The holy relic is safe. But it is inside the same building where the militants have taken refuge," Rehman said.

The army operation was ordered amid fears that the militants would try to remove the relic in a bid to spark protests in Kashmir, India's only Moslem-majority state.

Mass unrest gripped the state in 1964 when the relic was stolen but subsided when it was found and restored to the shrine.

A curfew was imposed for a second day in most of Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital and the urban hub of a four-year-old campaign for an end to Indian rule.

Troops patrolled the largely-deserted city of 700,000 people in vehicles fitted with machine guns, and foiled sporadic attempts at street protests. No violence was reported, however.

At Hazratbal, officers harangued the Moslem secessionists inside the shrine with appeals on loudhailers to surrender. They were met with chants of "Kashmir is ours, go back, go back," witnesses said.

An army officer said troops had been ordered to wait and not to fire "a single shot." But residents of the area were told to stay indoors and about 3,000 people living in the immediate vicinity of the shrine were evacuated.

Inspector General of Police A.K. Puri said many of the rebels wanted to surrender but were being prevented by a "few hardcore ones."

Twenty-five militants were arrested as they tried to flee Saturday.

Eight armoured vehicles had their guns trained on the four entrances to the complex. Soldiers manned machine gun posts and dug into improvised trenches.

In New Delhi, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's cabinet was constantly monitoring developments, officials said.

Violence related to the Moslem secessionist fight has claimed some 7,000 lives in Kashmir since 1989. India accuses Pakistan of fuelling the violence.

Pakistani 'Conspiracy' Alleged

BK1710161893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] India today charged Pakistan with involvement in a conspiracy to damage the holy shrine Hazratbal in Srinagar. In a strongly worded statement in New Delhi today, the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said the government has intelligence reports about it. He said the statement issued by the Pakistani Government on the issue reveals another blatant attempt by Islamabad to rake up communal and fundamentalist passions. He said the shrillness of the statemenmt clearly shows Pakistan's frustration and its failure to damage the holy shrine. He said for Pakistan no shrine, including the holy shrine of Hazratbal, is holy enough to deter it from carrying on its ugly but futile designs against India.

The spokesman asserted that Pakistan and the terrorists inside the shrine, who are armed and aided by Islamabad, are the real desecrators of the holy shrine. It is the Indian administration which has managed to foil the conspiracy. The government hopes that the terrorists will surrender peacefully without doing any damage to the shrine.

The spokesman said Pakistan's propaganda and baseless and motivated allegations will continue to be treated by New Delhi as brazen falsehood.

'Massive Blast' Near Mosque

NC1710191193 Paris AFP in English 1831 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Srinagar, India, Oct 17 (AFP)—A massive blast was reported late Sunday near an Islamic shrine where up to 100 Moslem militants have barricaded themselves against a possible storming by Indian soldiers.

Residents reporting the explosion near or from the Hazratbal shrine by telephone said they heard the blast around 11:15 p.m. (1815 GMT).

"It sounded like a rocket taking off," said schoolteacher Suryiya Begum from a residential district adjoining Hazratbal shrine located on the outskirts of this Kashmir state summer capital.

Some 10,000 Indian army soldiers surrounded the shrine, which displays a holy relic of Prophet Mohammad. Moslem militants earlier Sunday had threatened to blow up the sacred complex if the troops stormed the mosque.

The district has been declared out of bounds to journalists by soldiers guarding the area overlooking the Nagin Lake.

Further details were not immediately available.

The massive explosion which reverberated across the city of 700,000 people was followed by reports of sporadic firing from the direction of the Hazratbal shrine, the residents said by telephone.

"The firing lasted for some 10 minutes," said another resident, adding that the firing appeared to be from small arms.

Further Details of Explosion

NC1710205193 Paris AFP in English 1939 GMT 17 Oct 93

[By Surinder Oberoi]

[Text] Srinagar, India, Oct 18 (AFP)—A huge explosion late Sunday rocked a besieged shrine where some 100 barricaded Moslem militants have warned against a military action by India, residents and officials said Monday.

Residents reporting the explosion near the Hazratbal shrine by telephone said they heard the blast around 11:15 p.m. (1815 GMT) Sunday, adding that it was preceded by intermittent firing from small arms in the vicinity.

"It sounded like a rocket taking off," said schoolteacher Suryiya Begum from a residential district adjoining Hazratbal shrine located on the outskirts of this Kashmir state summer capital.

The explosion, which reverberated across this city of 700,000 people, was followed by sporadic firing near the Hazratbal shrine, residents said by telephone.

"The firing lasted for some 10 minutes," said one resident.

One of the militants from inside the white-marbled complex said the blast appeared to have occurred near the main entrance of the mosque, some 100 feet (30 metres) from a strongroom where a relic of the Prophet Mohammad is kept.

"The impact brought down many wall hangings and the building shook," the entrenched guerrilla said by telephone from inside the mosque, overlooking the scenic Nagin Lake in this Kashmir summer capital.

Inspector-General of Police, A.K. Suri, said the blast was caused by a rocket attack by militants in the residential district of Habak, half a kilometre away from besieged shrine.

It was heard within a three-kilometre (1.8-mile radius), Suri said.

The rattle of gunfire after the blast was in retaliation for the rocket attack, the officer said, as an army spokesman here asserted that infantry soldiers had not raided the barricaded complex.

"The army is not going to storm it. We will compel them to come out," said the army spokesman, Major Narendra Singh Salathia.

Power and water supplies to the building has been severed, and the militants have said they were running out of food and medicines. Several women and children are holed up inside Hazratbal.

Some 10,000 Indian army soldiers surrounded the shrine, where militants earlier Sunday threatened to blow up the complex if the troops stormed the mosque, one of the holiest Moslem sites in the world.

The district has been declared out of bounds to journalists by soldiers guarding the area, where a wooden prayer hall was burned down Saturday.

Further details from the besieged site was not immediately available, but the army spokesman said he would brief reporters in the event of any development.

'Uneasy Calm' Reported

BK1810031693 Hong Kong AFP in English 0313 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] Srinagar, India, Oct 18 (AFP)—Residents in this Kashmir summer capital woke to an uneasy calm Monday after an overnight blast close to an Islamic shrine where Muslim guerrillas are holed up triggered panic, officials said.

"There has been no further incidents since the blast," a police official said of the Sunday night explosion close to the barricaded Hazratbal shrine where some 100 Muslim guerrillas are holding out for the third day Monday.

Sporadic protest marches overnight and anti-Indian slogans from other city mosques ebbed early Monday as police maintained a vigil on this city of 700,000 people, residents said.

Overcast skies and pre-winter chill also kept many indoors, they added, as almost half the city was under a stringent curfew.

The huge blast at 11:15 p.m. (1815 GMT) Sunday brought down wall hangings in the white-marbled shrine and fuelled rumours of a showdown between the barricaded guerrillas and the Indian soldiers ringing the complex.

Police attributed the explosion to a rocket attack in the residential district of Habak, about half a kilometre (quarter mile) away from Hazratbal, and said that soldiers had not stormed the shrine.

An estimated 10,000 Indian troops are positioned near the shrine, where a holy relic of Prophet Mohammad is enshrined. The holed up guerrillas have warned they would blow up the complex with explosives if the army tried to storm it.

State administration officials said they would hold another round of talks with the besieged guerrillas belonging to at least three separate Muslim militant organisations of Kashmir later Monday.

Several civilians including children are also inside Hazratbal, which overlooks the picturesque Nagin Lake on Srinagar's outskirts.

Muslim militants are campaigning for the frontier state's secession from India. The four-year-old drive has left some 7,000 people dead in Kashmir, the country's only Muslim-majority province.

'Precautionary' Curfew Continues

BK1810032893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] In Srinagar, the JMK [Jammu and Kashmir] government officers are continuing their efforts to persuade the militants inside the Hazratbal shrine to surrender to the security forces for maintaining the sanctity of the shrine.

The director general of police, Mr. Mohinder Sabharwal, told our Srinagar correspondent this morning that the third round of negotiations between the militants and the government representatives have been scheduled for later this morning.

The divisional commissioner of Kashmir, Mr. Wajahat Habibullah, and the inspector general of police, Mr. A.K. Suri, are conducting the negotiations with the militants.

The militants told the authorities yesterday that they have planted explosives inside the shrine. The state governor general, Mr. K.V. Krishna Rao, has said that this makes it clear as who had desecrated the shrine.

The Home Minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, told our correspondent this morning that the inspector general of police will continue talks with the militants. He said the government is not giving up its hope and will continue its efforts till the militants surrender.

The cabinet secretary, Mr Zafar Saifullah, visited the Hazratbal shrine yesterday and reviewed the situation with senior officers. Meanwhile, precautionary curfew continues on the third day today in seven police station areas of Old Srinagar city. No untoward incident has been reported. An official spokesman had clarifed that about 600 families from houses adjoining the Hazratbal shrine were shifted two days ago to safer places after armed militants had burned down a structure within the shrine complex.

Army Surrounds Shrine With 'Artillery'

BK1810070493 Hong Kong AFP in English 0702 GMT 18 Oct 93

[By Izhar Wani]

[Text] Srinagar, India, Oct 18 (AFP)—Indian authorities resumed efforts to end a three-day standoff with Muslim militants barricaded inside Kashmir's holiest Islamic shrine on Monday, as troops ringing the complex moved in artillery.

Kashmir Inspector General of Police A.K. Suri and senior civilian administrator Wajahat Habibullah were deputed to resume talks with the rebels inside Hazratbal mosque, officials said.

"We are hopeful the situation can be defused," a spokesman for the Kashmir administration told AFP. "As of now we want a peaceful solution," he added when asked if the government had any plans to storm the shrine.

Habibullah and Suri had on Sunday entered the shrine and held talks with two masked, gun-toting representatives of the guerrillas, who have defied surrender calls and threatened to blow up the complex if the army launched an assault.

A single hair that Muslims believe comes from the beard of the Prophet Mohammad is preserved inside the scenic lakeside white- marble complex on the outskirts of Srinagar.

Up to 100 militants holed up inside demanded that the authorities lift a curfew clamped in much of Srinagar and permit them to hand over the relic to Muslim clergy and the "general masses." They also demanded safe passage.

"The thing is to go on talking so that we can find a meeting point," the Kashmir spokesman said when asked if the demands were acceptable.

The army meanwhile moved forward light artillery, rocket launchers and mortars to near the shrine gates and fanned out in surrounding neighbourhoods, said corps commander S. Padmanandan.

He said however that there were no plans to assault the mosque.

A huge explosion late Sunday near the besieged mosque had sparked panic in the city of 700,000 people, on tenterhooks after the rebel threat to blow up the shrine.

The blast was caused by a rocket fired by Muslim militants targeting Hazratbal but the missile fell short, Padmanandan said. "We were fortunate... otherwise the shrine would have been damaged," he said.

The explosion heard within a three-kilometre (1.8-mile radius) was followed by sporadic firing near the shrine, residents said.

A militant speaking on telephone from inside the mosque said the impact of the rocket exploding had brought down wall hangings and jolted the shrine.

Power and water supplies to the building have been severed. Besides the militants armed with sniper guns, gelatine sticks, grenades and assault rifles, about 20 women and children and 50 men are believed to be inside the complex.

Padmanandan said the army had information that food rations were dwindling. He said the militants had slaughtered and eaten one of the two stray cows that had been grazing on the lawns of the complex when the siege began.

The wailing of women and children could be heard from inside the shrine but the officer ruled out sending in milk and food.

"If the children want milk, they can come out and get it," he said.

The nearly 10,000 army and paramilitary troops ringing Hazratbal, who on Sunday were reinforced by elite Black Cat commandos, continued their siege of the complex under overcast skies and in pre-winter chill.

The siege of the shrine has triggered widespread resentment among the Muslim clergy and civilians in Kashmir, India's only Muslim- majority state where the four-year-old secessionist fight has claimed more than 7,000 lives.

The indefinite curfew continued meanwhile keeping residents indoors in most parts of Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital. All shops and businesses were shut and transport stayed off the roads.

Additional Forces Deployed

BK1810074493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] In Srinagar, additional contingent of security forces has been deployed in the area around the Hazratbal shrine following last night's rocket fire by the militants from outside the shrine. The rocket was fired from the (Havak) area and it landed about 100 feet away from the outer wall of the shrine. The corps commander, Lieutenant General S. Padmanadan, told newsmen this morning that Hazratbal shrine is fully safe. He said the Army party sent for search in the (Havak) area was also fired upon by the militants, but none was injured. The Army immediately cordoned off more areas around the shrine to eliminate the possibility of any further rocket or grenade attack by the militants from outside. Meanwhile, about 50 armed militants remained inside the Hazratbal shrine and civil as well as Army authorities continue their efforts to persuade them to surrender. Curfew continues in seven police station areas in old Srinagar city on the third day today.

Iran

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Visit to Central Asia Viewed

Kazakhstan Spokesman on Visit

LD1710092493 Tehran IRNA in English 0815 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Tehran, Oct. 17, IRNA—The forthcoming visit of Iran's President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to Kazakhstan is a "turning point" in the history of Tehran-Almaty relations, a spokesman for Kazakh president said Saturday.

Speaking at a press conference, the spokesman told reporters that Almaty attached great importance to the visit.

President Rafsanjani is to visit Kazakhstan on a four-leg tour which will take him to other three Central Asian Republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

The spokesman further added that Rafsanjani and his Kazakh counterpart would discuss major issues including establishment of refineries in Kazakhstan by Iran, oil pipelines in Kazakhstan passing through Iran, revival of the "silk road" by the establishment of railways linking China, Central Asia, Iran and Turkey and, promotion of bilateral ties.

Meanwhile, Radio Baku quoted the spokesman as saying that President Rafsanjani's visit would strengthen Tehran's diplomatic relations and bilateral economic ties with the said republics.

In another development, Azerbaijan's non-official news agency Saturday reported that Rafsanjani would also visit Baku, Azerbaijan, within the next few days.

However, the report on Rafsanjani's visit to Azerbaijan has not been confirmed by official sources here.

'Much Interest' Generated

LD1710192793 Tehran IRNA in English 1748 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Moscow, Oct 17 (IRNA)—Much interest is being generated in political, cultural and economic circles in Central Asia on the eve of President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to four of the newly independent Muslim republics.

Hojat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani is to fly to the Kazakh capital tomorrow on the first leg of his 10-day tour which will also take him to Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

Kazakh Foreign Minister Tuleutay Suleymenov hailed the Iranian president's visit as the "most important" event in broadening of Tehran-Alma-Ata ties.

Suleymenov in his meeting with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ezi in Almaty on Saturday [16 October] said the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) is an important factor in closing the ranks and developing cooperation among the regional states.

Last year Kazakhstan along with the other five Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union, joined the ECO which was originally founded by Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey. Recently Afghanistan became the 10th member state of the organisation which groups together almost 300 million Muslim people spread over a vast area of the Asian continent.

Va'ezi said Iran and Kazakhstan enjoy high potentials to promote political and economic relations, and could play a stabilising role in regional peace.

He added that cooperation among Iran, Kazakhstan and the other three countries bordering the Caspian Sea—Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Russia—was important for promotion of regional ties.

In related news from Ashgabat Saturday, Iranian Ambassador Gholam Reza Baqeri, said the visit of President Rafsanjani to Turkmenistan would boost political, economic and cultural fields.

Besides talks with his Turkmen counterpart, Saparmurad Niyazov, Rafsanjani is scheduled to visit historical sites of the country which are reminiscences of Iran's ancient history.

The Turkmen people and government attach great importance to Rafsanjani's visit, he said, pointing out that Turkmenistan provides access to Central Asia for Iran while Iran connects Turkmenistan and Central Asia to the Persian Gulf.

According to Baqeri, Iran exported clothes, foodstuff, sanitary ware, household appliances and industrial goods to Turkmenistan and imported wood, metals and cement in return.

Iranian experts are supervising work on large tracts of agricultural lands in the republic, which shares borders with the northern Iranian provinces of Mazandaran and Khorasan, he added.

The Iranian diplomat noting the success of the third Iranian trade exhibit in Ashgabat, urged Iranians to establish and invest in industries in Turkmenistan.

He underscored the importance of the proposed rail link with the Kazakh capital Almaty, saying due to its strategic significance, work was fast progressing on the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan rail track which will connect Iran to Turkmenistan and thence to the Central Asian railway network.

President Leaves for Tashkent 18 Oct

LD1810084493 Tehran IRNA in English 0709 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] Tehran, Oct. 18, IRNA—Iran's President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani left here for Tashkent, Uzbekistan, Monday [18 October] morning on a 9-day tour of five

Central Asian and Caucausian countries which will also take him to Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.

Prior to his departure, the president who is heading a high-ranking economic and diplomatic delegation, told reporters that the objective of his visit is to get more acquainted with the republics and to explore avenues for further promotion of bilateral cooperation in economic and cultural fields. He said that he would visit the Republic of Azerbaijan at the invitation of Azeri officials.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani was seen off at Mehrabad International Airport by First Vice President Hasan Habibi, the cabinet ministers, Majles deputies, representatives of the judiciary and a number of foreign diplomats here.

President Notes Tour's Objectives

LD1810112393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani left Tehran this morning at the head of a political-economic delegation on an official visit to the countries of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgysztan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan. According to our correspondent, on the first leg of his trip the president arrived at Tashkent, capital of the Uzbekistan Republic.

In a brief interview at the airport before leaving Tehran, he talked to our correspondent about the objectives of this trip and the most important isues which he will discuss with the officials of these countries. He said:

[Begin Hashemi-Rafsanjani recording] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The heads of these states have all visited Iran, and we have not yet returned their visits. Naturally we had to do this. Moreover, these newly independent Muslim countries will obviously be among the best friends of the Islamic Republic. In addition to this, most of them are in our neighborhood. To meet the leaders and the people of the so called newly born Islamic countries can have many effects. In our schedule we have mostly included the issues on which we have grounds for extensive cooperation; that is, in the fields of communication, commercial, oil, gas, industrial and cultural cooperation. We have a regional issue concerning the Caspian Sea. There are also a great number of regional and global political issues. I think this visit will be a good opportunity to review these matters. Our greater familiarity with these countries, their needs and possibilities will be pursued.

I will visit five countries which are Islamic; that is, they are predominantly Muslims. Originally only four countries were on the schedule. But since the presidential elections in Azerbaijan were concluded and that country's situation became clear, it was agreed that we should go there too. It will be a long visit. I hope we will be able to benefit the world of Islam and also our own country. [end recording]

Ambassador Denies Plan To Assassinate 'Arafat

LD1710101293 Tehran IRNA in English 0914 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Beirut, Oct. 17, IRNA—Iran's ambassador to Lebanon Homayun Alizadeh Saturday [16 October] categorically denied fabrications by some Palestinian circles on Iran's alleged involvement in plans to assassinate PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. Alizadeh told IRNA here that such allegations were fabricated by certain suspicious compromising Palestinian groups which tried to restore their prestige lost following the disgraceful Camp David accord.

Through such allegations, the Iranian ambassador noted, those Palestinian groups intended to approach closer to the United States and the Zionist regime. Alizadeh further added that fabrications of that nature were in line with vicious attempts and conspiracies of global arrogance against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He stressed that the recent Gaza-Jericho accord between the Zionists and the PLO had undermined Palestinian aspirations and was full of contradictions to the extent that such allegations could not adjust the move.

Commentary Views al-Shar' Visit to Cairo

NC1710160893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Unattributed commentary from the "In the Margin of the News" feature]

[Text] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' arrived in Egypt yesterday and met with Egyptian officials to discuss developments in the Middle East crisis.

Political observers believe that Cairo and Damascus have special but antithetical positions on the process of Middle East developments, and each side inevitably has to see what the other side has to offer in order to bolster its own position.

Egypt is presently the center of compromise in the region, where the heads of the Zionist regime are meeting with the Palestinians, paving the way for the implementation of the current compromise by hosting the talks between the PLO's branch committees and the Zionist regime.

On the other side, Syria has become the focus of the opponents of compromise in the Arab world. Damascus continuously criticizes the Gaza-Jericho pact, because it has weakened the positions of Syria and Lebanon in the Washington talks. Because of its opposition to the PLO's compromise with Israel, Syria is currently paving the way for the activities of the opponents of this compromise in Damascus. Recently eight nationalist Palestinian groups and two Islamist groups—Hamas and the Islamic Jihad—formed a 10-member alliance in Damascus and are moving toward replacing the PLO.

The same political observers believe that with its participation in the peace talks Syria does not oppose the principle of compromise, because the sole objective behind the Washington talks is to reach a compromise. The differences of opinion between Syria and the PLO are currently over the extent and mode of compromise; if Israel is ready to withdraw from all of the occupied Syrian territories, Syria will definitely stop its opposition.

This situation has created a mutual attraction between the center of compromise in Cairo and the center of opposition to compromise in Damascus. In other words, in view of Egypt's mediating role in regional compromises, Syria is trying to project its serious opposition to the West and Israel through Egypt and to use Egypt's role to achieve its final objective—Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Rowhani Reiterates Stand on PLO-Israel Accord

NC1710074793 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 7 Oct 93 p 2

[IRNA report from Tehran]

[Text] The secretary of the Supreme National Security Council [SNSC] described the efforts to gather aid for the signatories of the compromise with Israel as an attempt to cover up the popular opposition, which grows day by day, to the accord the PLO signed with Israel.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hasan Rowhani said: The formulators of the shameful PLO-Israel accord—the objective of which is to eliminate the intifadah—are ignoring the lawful rights of the Palestinians by making superficial claims of seeking assistance for the Palestinian refugees.

Dr. Rowhani was speaking to a group of editors and editors in chief of IRNA at a news session. He added: Palestine belongs to the Palestinian people, and no individual has the right to give in to a compromise with Zionists on behalf of the Palestinians. In answer to a question on his opinion regarding the claims of the signatories of the compromising accord, which they consider an instrument of peace and stability, he said: The compromising accord does not incorporate any specific plan for the solution of the basic and fundamental problems of the Palestinian people. The steadily increasing opposition of the popular circles in Palestine to the compromise with Israel shows that the claims that the Palestinians concur are unfounded.

Dr. Rowhani stated: Justice is mandatory for durable peace in the region, and the Islamic Republic of Iran will not agree to any unjust and ignoble plan that would result in stabilizing Israel.

The deputy speaker of the Islamic Majles deemed the vindication of the rights of all the Palestinians the just solution to the international issue of Palestine, and said: Any kind of retreat in the face of the aggressive nature of the usurpist Jerusalem regime is detrimental to the interests of the Islamic ummah.

He stressed that Iran has opposed and will oppose the accord—signed individually by 'Arafat—at all regional and international sessions.

Our correspondent then asked the SNSC secretary about the report that for the first time since the signing of the compromising accord, the Israeli forces had imposed a curfew in three parts of the city of Gaza and in the camps of Barij, Halbilah, and Rafiyah and had carried out extensive operations against Palestinian activists. A correspondent asked his opinion on these moves by the Zionist regime, which are a clear proof of the fear of the intifadah felt by the occupiers of Jerusalem; to which Dr. Rowhani replied: Contrary to the opinion of the signatories of this compromising plan and the Zionist regime officials, the Palestinian nation will not rest until the rights of the Palestinian nation are attained.

The SNSC secretary was then asked: How should we view the Zionist propaganda that Iran is a military threat to the region's countries? Rowhani stated: The enemies of the Islamic Revolution are well aware that expanding relations with the Islamic world and regional countries is among the priorities of Iran's foreign policy. However, since the solidarity and unity of the Islamic and non-aligned countries threatens the enemies of Islam, they try to spread baseless and false propaganda about Iran's interference in the internal affairs of regional countries and fabrications of Iran's military strength in an attempt to hinder the deepening and broadening of relations between Islamic countries and Islamic Iran, which is a "cradle of Islam."

Our correspondent then asked: Recently, the Western press asked you whether Iran would embark on a military action against the PLO-Israel compromise, and it quoted you as saying that Iran would not take any action against the accord. What is your opinion on this subject?

Dr. Rowhani answered: As we have said many times, we believe that the signing of this accord is in total conflict with the aspirations of the Palestinian nation. Not only does it not ensure the rights of the Palestinian people, it will also create new problems for them. The Palestinian people and the free thinkers of the world will expose the nature of this accord by political and propaganda means in a very articulate manner. The future will prove that this accord will not bring any benefits for the Palestinian people or even for the organization which has signed it.

He continued: The only way to save the people from homelessness is to forge unity and solidarity in order to attain their lawful rights, and they will continue their struggle—which is also their legitimate prerogative—against the usurpers until their rights are vindicated. On the basis of its divine, revolutionary, and humanitarian obligation, the Islamic Republic of Iran will not hesitate to take all measures for the vindication of the rights of the Palestinian nation and the liberation of Holy Jerusalem. The choice of Palestinians to continue their tactic of struggle and the intifadah is to the benefit of the Palestinian people. But as I said in an interview with a Western news agency, the Islamic Republic of Iran is not seeking to pursue any military action with regard to this shameful accord.

Dr. Rowhani stressed: In the present sensitive circumstances, the solution to the problems of the Islamic world lies in the unity and solidarity of all Muslims in the world. All Islamic countries should thwart the attainment of the objectives of the powers of world arrogance with their vigilance and alertness.

Foreign Ministry Official Leaves for Baghdad

LD1710122993 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Javad Zarif, deputy for international affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry, set off for Baghdad today at the head of a political delegation. This visit is taking place after a meeting between the two countries' foreign ministers on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session and according to an invitation by the Iraqi deputy foreign minister.

Before leaving Tehran, the Foreign Ministry deputy for international affairs said: The issue of the remaining PoWs as well as ways of implementing the deferred articles of UN Security Council Resolution 598 will be reviewed during the visit. He stressed: A settlement of those issues is important if good-neighborliness and stability are to be created in the region.

The Foreign Ministry deputy for international affairs denied the rumors by some Arab and Western media as well as a U.S. official at the UN to the effect that the visit is for the purpose of creating commercial ties between the two countries. He said: The Islamic Republic of Iran has frequently reaffirmed its commitment to the Security Council resolutions on Iraq. The Foreign Ministry deputy for international affairs considered that the spread of such rumors stems from the touchiness [hassasi'at] of some circles—especially America—about the creation of good-neighborliness between the two countries of Iran and Iraq.

Mojahedin-e Khalq Stages Exercises on Border

PM1510104193 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Oct 93 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Mojahedin-e Khalq Conducts Exercises on Iraqi-Iranian Border"]

[Text] Paris, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—In a statement issued in Paris yesterday, the Mojahedin-e Khalq group said that its forces have conducted large-scale military exercises along the Iraqi border with Iran in which military helicopters participated for the first time alongside all the specialized formations belonging to the Mojahedin-e Khalq forces.

The statement said that the exercises, code-named Shining Sun, were much more comprehensive than other exercises conducted in Iraq last August. The statement said that Mas'ud Rajavi, leader of the organization and commander in chief, delivered a speech in which he praised the results of the military drill, which reflect the scale of the qualitative progress and the new level of operational and military performance the "Liberation Army" has achieved.

Maneuvers Preparation for 'Assault'

LD1610084593 Tehran IRNA in English 0711 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] Tehran, Oct. 16, IRNA—The Baghdad-sponsored Mojahedin e-Khalq terrorist organization (MKO), Friday alleged it conducted a four-day military maneuver alongside Iran-Iraq border. The Friday issue of THE WASHINGTON POST printed the statement issued by MKO terrorists in which they claimed that thousands of its militia took part in the maneuver using helicopters and heavy artillery.

Baghdad-backed MKO leader Mas'ud Rajavi claimed the objective for conducting the maneuver was to prepare grounds for what he termed "a planned assault" against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The MKO radio recently warned Iran of MKO's plan to launch an assault against Iran. In the past two months the MKO terrorists have infiltrated into Iran at least 3 times, killing six people including two children.

Border Guards Arrest Two

LD1710163293 Tehran IRNA in English 1428 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Mehran, Ilam Prov., Oct. 17, IRNA—Two members of Mojahedin e-Khalq Terrorist Organization (MKO) infiltrating into Iran's western border with Iraq Friday night were arrested by Iranian border guards.

Two automatic rifles, two hand grenades, a camera and some forged documents were confiscated from the two MKO members who identified themselves as Seyfollah Sa'di, 26, and Ramezan Nari, 21.

Over the past two months, Iraqi-sponsored MKO terrorists have infiltrated into western border regions of Iran, ambushing border settlers and killing six people including two children.

Fereshteh Dana, a four-year old girl and 'Ali Yavari, a six-year old boy were murdered in the terrorist attack. The parents of the children are now being treated at a hospital for wounds they suffered in the MKO attack.

On Saturday, the Iraqi-based terrorist group claimed responsibility for the attack, claiming that the attack was directed against Iranian law enforcement forces.

In a program broadcast on Iraqi television, MKO threatened to launch a large offensive against Iran.

In the initial interrogations, Sa'di and Nari confessed that they had been dispatched to Iran to establish contact with four fugitive members of a busted drug ring.

Sa'di later told IRNA that MKO was frustrated over the annihilation of the drug gang run jointly by MKO and notorious traffickers. MKO then commissioned a 17-member team led by a woman and an Iraqi officer to estimate the extent of the damage and propose retaliatory measures.

A group of 13 MKO terrorists and traffickers recently arrested by Iranian law enforcement personnel gave details of their mission in a program broadcast on Iranian T.V. last week.

Interior Minister on Security in Kordestan

NC1510080193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Text] The interior minister has said that a special strike force is to be formed to seriously confront any type of security problems in Kordestan Province. Besharati told correspondents in Sanandaj yesterday: The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps and the Armed Forces are duty-bound to assist the law enforcement forces in this matter and, God willing, we will see positive results because of this decision in the near future.

IRNA reports that the interior minister stressed that security is an important issue, adding: We will do our best to establish security throughout the country and especially in Kordestan Province.

Commenting on the Interior Ministry's new plans and programs in the fight against the merchants of death on the country's eastern borders, Interior Minister Besharati stated: Two plans that include blocking the borders and seriously confronting drug traffickers inside the country are being studied. He added: We are holding talks with the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan on blocking the borders and, fortunately, we have achieved favorable results with the Pakistani Government. Besharati added: We have also invited the Turkish interior minister for talks on the same subject.

President Praises Intelligence Services' Work

LD1610165293 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, at a gathering of the managers and deputies of popular intelligence [ettela'at-e mardomi] this morning, stressed the need for enhancing the level of education and analysis of state intelligence forces. He said he considered a universal outlook, insight into the future, a knowledge of the government's long-term projects and policies, and access to comprehensive and essential information to be some of the important instruments of the activities of the intelligence forces. He said: Superficiality and preoccupation with day-to-day issues are the blight of all world revolutions and must be seriously avoided.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, stressing the need for possessing sufficient knowledge, exercising care in offering information, and reflecting realities by state intelligence forces, pointed out: The existence of the invaluable element of sincerity in intelligence forces, their anonymity, as well as the non-reflection of their activities in the community is safeguarded by God, and the Almighty's satisfaction with their services and activities is the best capital for such individuals. The government's authorities also are aware and appreciative of the value of the work done by those toilers.

The president, laying emphasis on the role of intelligence forces in maintaining state stability and security, considered the safeguarding of the aspirations of the Islamic revolution and the adopting of principled stances by the Islamic Republic of Iran against arrogant policies to be one of the factors in the vindictiveness of the enemies against our country. He said: Despite the various conspiracies of the enemies, the Islamic Republic of Iran, proud and resistant, has set its eye on a bright and glorious future and is going forward.

Yazdi Gives Friday Prayers Sermon

LD1510174493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1130 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Second Friday prayers sermon by Ayatollah Yazdi, head of the judiciary branch, in Tehran on 15 October—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Since time is short, let me take this opportunity to tell you about two or three matters I have in mind.

Under such circumstances, where after many centuries Islam has reached such power and greatness, today the system ruling this country is of a completely exceptional quality and incomparable to all the world systems. That is, none of the world ruling systems corresponds to the Islamic ruling system. In Islam, at the head of the government and at the head of the power pyramid is an esteemed faqih [jurisconsult], guardian of the order, protector, ruler, and custodian, in whose hands rests the authority of the government and in the text of the constitution the regulating of general policies have been given to him. That is how the system is. Thank God that today, in effect, an exalted personality, great and valued jurisconsult such as his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i [crowd chants: "God's Blessing Be Upon Mohammad and His Scion"]—may God extend his shadow—is leading this country, delineates, regulates, and conveys the policies and the state's general lines—taking into consideration legal obligations—and makes use of the instruments of the Constitution at necessary times. He refers to the Expediency Council, the Security Council—which are in the Constitution—and seeks their opinions and puts them to use if he deems them necessary. He delineates the general policies and conveys them. That is the quality of leadership in this system. The circumstances that exist in the system are very high scientific, theological, and natural conditions and we all know how they are. At the head of the executive power and government is a known personality, a personality with full experience, the imam's companion, and the assistant to the leadership, who has begun his work with a government chosen by the Islamic Consultative Assembly, has carried out the first plan, has submitted the second plan, and is getting the job done.

Under such circumstances, any debate, any action that distracts public opinion, disheartens the people, and is unjudiciously marginalizing, in our opinion, is a sin, an unforgivable misdeed, a mistake, and is confronting the authority of the system. Under such condition, great care must be taken in discussions, especially from the open and free platforms. You may ask me: Did you not say that there are freedoms in the Islamic system and the democracy which exists in Islam is the highest type of democracy? Yes, even now we say the same thing. The freedom that exists in Islam, the democracy that exists in Islam and the government of the Islamic Republic are of their highest order and must be utilized well. It is being utilized.

When an issue is going through its legal processes, when issues are under the supervision of the highest authorities, under the supervision of the first leadership rank, under the supervision of the Islamic Consultative Assembly—which are the official supervisory organs of the state—the raising of disputed issues, which may be disheartening, is not appropriate, with due consideration for all rights and freedoms.

The case of the magazine FARAD consisted of two charges, the charge against the designer and the charge against the manager; it had two aspects; it was reviewed in two competent courts.

The crime committed by the designer was reviewed in a competent court; a ruling was given; an objection was raised; it went to the Supreme Court; it was reversed; it was referred back; it was reviewed again; a ruling was given; a 10-year sentence was passed. In all those stages, it enjoyed all legal facilities, that is, defense council, open court, and so forth. Those who wish can go ahead and look into the matter. Why do the papers divert public opinion this way and that?

The crime committed by the manager was a journalistic crime; it was reviewed in accordance with the Press Act. There was a jury. I said here once, basically, the manner in which a journalistic crime is dealt with is different from that of other crimes. Both the Constitution and ordinary law have made a distinction. In fact, it is the jury that issues the final verdict or ruling. The jury has given its verdict, and he was acquitted. It is stated in the law that if a journalistic crime were reviewed and a jury acquitted, no judicial official could object, or call for a change of verdict. It is different from other forms of crime. If they do not have knowledge of the law why do they put pen to paper? I just wanted to say that both cases were properly seen to in competent courts.

Now to the topic of this Mr. (Forsch) from Germany, who used to work in the private sector, as a businessman or specifically as a contractor in construction industry. Five years ago he was arrested, charged with embezzlement, put on trial and subsequently freed. However, he once again continued his affairs, and was arrested on the same charge two years ago and prosecuted. He was put on bail and then freed, on the condition that he should not leave the country. Later he made an appeal against this restriction on the ground of needing medical treatment. According to the law, he was under bail, and his property was used as the guarantee for his bail. He was therefore allowed to leave the country in order to receive medical treatment. In his interview in Germany, he himself clarified that he would be returning to Iran for his trial in order to get his property back. Therefore, permitting (Forsch) to leave the country was not connected to anything or anywhere. It was merely based on independent laws and regulations. According to the Constitution, the country's legal apparatus is independent and carries its tasks autonomously. It does not take any issue into account, and it acts solely on the basis of laws and regulations.

Another issue is that at times I am asked about the situation regarding the editor of SALAM, and sometimes I am quoted as saying things about this issue. Sometimes I am asked that if this is what I say then why such and such is taking place, etc. I have this to say about all this, as I have repeatedly said before: If someone is accused of doing something, one should not pass any judgment on him while he is merely accused and not convicted. At the moment matters are being investigated. Once things are clarified, naturally there will be a trial, whose verdict will put an end the whole affair. During the phase of interrogation and investigations that take place in the magistrate court no one can express any definite opinion. If I merely guess that he is only charged for offences relating to the press and he should therefore be dealt with on the basis of the press laws, it is possible that I may be making a mistake, and he might be having other charges too, which will be clarified during investigations performed as a duty by the magistrate courts. At present, therefore, one cannot, and should not, express an opinion on the issue. We must allow the case to go through its normal stages until it reaches the court, the verdict of whom will be final.

The most important of the world issues, which we are also familiar with, is the issue of the 'Arafat-Israel compromise. We should not call it the PLO-Israel compromise, because as you know even a great number of the PLO's Central Council members have opposed that agreement. So we cannot call it the PLO-Israel compromise. At least 25 members of the Central Council have opposed it. The members of the PLO's Central Council do not accept that compromise. Therefore that is the 'Arafat-Israel compromise and not the PLO-Israel compromise.

The second point is that we all know that from the Palestinian groups who oppose Israel—as far as we know and you are also aware—at least 10 groups have joined hands since that event and they have formed a united front and their united front has rejected the compromise. They have said that the struggle and the intifadah will continue. Very well, considering the current situation, we can no longer call it a compromise between Palestinians and Israel, or the so-called agreement between the PLO and Israel, or between Palestinians and Israel. 'Arafat is not the Palestinians nor the people of Palestine. If a person is responsible for something, we cannot call him the people of Palestine, particularly when his work is rejected by his peers and colleagues within the zone of that responsibility.

Let me tell you, without naming names, what an Arab leader's clear interpretation was. He said first of all Israel does not seriously seek peace. Israel has not given up anything so far and it asks for more as we continue. If you look at the text of the accord you see that it is also along the same kind of lines. In fact it is one of the most abject of agreements considering particular interpretations that can be derived from its articles, which we do not have enough time to discuss. If you look at some of those articles you realize how illiterate, cheap, abject, and inconsiderate to the rights of his own nation a person would be to sign such a thing, which if you present it to any legal authority dozens of problems can be found with it. In any case, for any reason, for any kind of pressure, or how stupid and ignorant he has been, he has signed it.

That great personality who is the leader of an Arab country says that Israel is not seriously seeking peace. It has always asked for more and has never given up anything. Second, he says: I cannot stand against my people's will. He has no connection with Palestinians and he is from a different Arab country. If I do something like 'Arafat has done, my people will punish me. Those are the remarks of the head of that country. He says if I want to do that my people will punish me. Then he says I advise Arab leaders not to talk with Israel one by one and on an individual basis. If you do that you will endanger your lives, and you should know that people will not be indifferent towards those issues. Those remarks were made by the leader of an Arab country. [passage omitted]

The next issue is about the domineering and hegemonistic attitude that America has always had and that it still has. Recently, all of you must have heard in their comments that they even set claim to the leadership of the world. I do not know that, just because the arrogant Eastern power has disintegrated, it means that the arrogant Western power should now become the leader of the world! What is the justification for this? For what reason? Why? Are other people in the world not human beings? Do people in other countries not understand political issues? Do they not possess the ability to run their country? Do the people of the world require a guardian for running the world? Do the people of the world require a custodian? What does this mean, that you set claim to the leadership of the world? And what leadership! One cannot understand if this is the new world order or the new world policy!

Is it right that one day.... [pauses] I say nothing about the measures against Libya in the past. Now they are planning an oil embargo against Libya. They accuse Sudan of supporting terrorism. In each country they start with the policy of accusing the country, that one should weaken the dignity of the country in public opinion, put pressure on them, and then intervene and enter. Is this a humane system that you bring accusations against anyone that you wish to put under pressure, that you destroy their dignity in front of public opinion, you put pressure on them, you impose an economic embargo and then interfere? Toward this end, you take into service innocent and valuable organizations that have heavy human responsibilities on their shoulder, such as the United Nations, and you make use of them.

The Somali issue clarified your stance. It clarified your immaturity and ignorance even in political issues. You intervene in that country in the name of supporting the hungry, supporting peace, or preventing clashes in Somalia. One should say that you bring that country under your occupation, under your military occupation. You think that the people of Somalia, in your words the people of a hungry and poor country, should sit and watch when you fire at them from the ground and from the air and slaughter them. Well, it is natural that they will make use of any means and will fight against you.

They fought and they brought the issue to a point that the public opinion in America and even the Congressmen put pressure on the President, and his excellency the President was made to realize that his policy was a wrong policy, and he had to understand that the situation in the world has changed. In fact, they have to leave that country in a degrading manner.

You notice that at the same time that he increased the number of military forces he also set a date for their departure. What does this mean? If we look at the issue more carefully, we will see that even their allies did not go along with them either.

Let alone the people in Somalia, even their allies did not go along with them. They also wish to withdraw their forces early. It was made clear that America has misused them.

Here, I just wish to say one sentence to American politicians and to his excellency the American President: Today is different from the time when you could ignore the nations, when you could formulate certain policies behind closed doors and impose them on the nations and force them on the people with your modern weapons.

Modern weapons are ineffective in the face of the vigilance and awareness of the nations of the world. You should understand this. [crowd chants: "God is great"]

If America was fighting against a big power and was faced with some difficultues, it would be something. However, the situation in the African continent is clear, and the situation in a number of African countries is clearer. When they are defeated in Somalia, and when the people in Haiti do not even allow their forces to land, are these not sufficient signs of their weakness, degradation, and impotence? They are sufficient, let them now understand this and take heed.

The last issue I wish to refer to is the issue of human rights. We seriously follow this issue. We ask the Human Rights Committee affiliated to the United Nations and even the UN General Assembly to clearly investigate this legal issue. The principles and yardsticks of human rights are not what you have drawn up. You completely ignore religions, traditions, and cultures and you formulate certain rights on the basis of your own yardsticks and then you say that such and such a country has violated human rights, or put pressure on our country or any other country saying that we have violated human rights. When Islam rules in our country and when Islam has been chosen by our people and one should say that the vast majority and nearly all the people of our country have chosen the sovereignty of Islam, you cannot refer to acting on the basis of Islam as violation of human rights just because you have different yardsticks. One should have serious and new discussions about these yardsticks and major research should be carried out. Thanks be to God, some work has been done on these issues in Islamic countries and some documents have been prepared. [passage omitted]

Qom Sermon Condemns U.S. Interference

LD1510190393 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1520 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Friday prayers by Ayatollah Javadi-Amoli in Qom on 15 October—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted]

Now we deal with what happened and is still happening in the world.

Indeed the Islamic revolution has been exported. The Islamic revolution has been exported with this Koranic message: Oppression is tolerated only by the abject [preceding sentence in Arabic].

The imam [Khomeyni] rose up and delivered this message. The people believed him, made the revolution happen, and succeeded, and the revolution's influence reached all over the world.

If they claim the world is a village, they should know that the message of the revolution and the message of the imam have reached everywhere.

America has been disgraced in Somalia whether it likes it or not. [participants chant: "God is great"; "Khamene'i Is the Leader"; "Death to America"; "Death to Israel," among others]

The words which Bill Clinton and others like him should understand is that people have realized that it is disgraceful to have an abject life, whether they think this is right or not. This, however, is the only thing that rules the world of the oppressed. The message of the religion is this: The oppressed have tasted the sweet sherbet of martyrdom. [preceding sentence in Arabic] They will fight while they are alive and when they are dead, then whom is America going to rule over? How long does America want to go on killing? Who does it want to kill? How many does it want to kill?

You see how the PLO-Israeli [agreement] became so disgraceful and the honorable and oppressed people of Palestine increased their demonstrations day by day. They say we want to lead an honorable life. Who does America want to rule over when the people of Palestine are killed, and when they drink the sherbet of martyrdom? America thought it could kill some of the people, kill their voices, and then rule over the rest. That cannot happen. [passage omitted]

*SALAM Caller on Banking System Inefficiency

93LA0239L Tehran SALAM in Persian 1 Sep 93 p 3

[Text] I have foreign currency accounts in the Melli and Sepah Banks. Forty days ago, I wrote a check for an amount ($100,000) from the Sepah Bank foreign currency account to the Melli Bank currency account. It has now been 42 days, and this money has not been cashed, and the check has not returned either, even though I know that the money has been taken out of the Sepah foreign currency account. It has been left in suspension in the transfer. When I asked the reason, they said that many people have a similar problem.

Well, then announce that these banks cannot be trusted, and the people should keep their money and foreign currency at home. What kind of banking and economic system is this? Who is responsible for investigating this disorder and mismanagement?

Pakistan

'Indian Occupation' of Hazratbal Shrine Decried

BK1710022493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Pakistan has condemned the provocative action at the Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar and urged India to vacate the holy place immediately and repair it. A statement by the Foreign Office in Islamabad has expressed deep grief over reports of Indian occupation forces besieging the Hazratbal Shrine and setting fire to it. The statement said that civilized people throughout the world will condemn the serious desecration of the holiest shrine in Kashmir. It said that the incident indicates that India has no regard for the religious sentiments of the Kashmiri people. It also points to the fact that serious human rights violations are being carried out through the subjugation of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The statement said that the provocative action will further boost the determination of the people of occupied Kashmir, and they will continue the just struggle for their right to self- determination.

A total strike is being observed throughout Azad Jammu and Kashmir today to protest the despicable desecration of the Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar. A protest rally will also be held in Muzaffarabad, which will be addressed by prominent Kashmiri leaders.

'Immediate' UN Measures Urged

BK1710112493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] The Azad Kashmir cabinet has strongly condemned the desecration of Dargah Hazratbal [Muslim shrine] by Indian forces in Srinagar. The cabinet, which held an emergency meeting in Muzaffarabad today, adopted a resolution urging the United Nations to take immediate measures in view of the delicate situation in occupied Kashmir arising out of the sacrilegious attempt on the Dargah Hazaratbal.

Bhutto, Sharif Condemn 'Desecration'

BK1710160093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] A wave of anger and anguish has swept the people throughout Pakistan, Azad Kashmir and across the Line of Control at the desecration of the Hazartbal shrine in Srinagar by the Indian occupation forces.

The Pakistan Government has condemned the setting ablaze of the Hazratbal shrine by the Indian troops and has demanded that the Indian Government immediately end the siege of the shrine and repair the damaged caused to it. Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan summoned the Indian high commissioner to the Foreign Office today and apprised him of the sentiments of the government and people of Pakistan regarding this incident of sacrilege.

Political leaders have also reflected the nation's sentiments on the desecration of Hazaratbal shrine. Benazir Bhutto, cochairperson of the Pakistan People's Party, has condemned the sacrilegious attack on the Hazaratbal shrine in Srinagar by Indian troops and setting it ablaze and described it as one of the worst acts of brutality in modern times. In a statement, she has said that the desecration of the Muslim holy place in the occupied Kashmir is an ignoble and ignominious mischief and a nefarious design against Indian Muslims that has exposed India's claim of secularism, and these brutal acts go against the teachings of Mahatama Gandhi. Ms. Benazir Bhutto said the brutal attack on the Hazratbal shrine has exposed the nefarious designs of Indian troops to massacre Muslims in the Kashmir Valley.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Group President Mohammad Nawaz Sharif has appealed to the people to observe a day of protest tomorrow to condemn the desecration of the Hazratbal shrine by Indian troops. In a statement, he asked the people to organize peaceful rallies and make processions and offer prayers at mosques for the success of the freedom struggle of the people of occupied Kashmir.

'Freedom Fighters' Vow Fight Till Death

BK1810040093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, the freedom fighters inside the Hazratbal shrine have expressed their determination, saying that if the 10,000 Indian troops now laying siege to the shrine try to attack the shrine, we will not lay down our arms, but will fight to the last. A freedom fighter inside the shrine told AFP by telephone that although we do not have food, water, or medicine, we are ready to fight.

Meanwhile, there was a huge explosion in the shrine last night. There was intermittent firing after the explosion.

Thousands of Kashmiris took to the streets to protest the siege of the shrine. They violated the curfew restrictions and marched toward the Law Chowk demanding the withdrawal of Indian troops from the shrine.

The arson committed by Indian troops at the shrine is being condemned the world over. In a statement, Hamid al-Ghabid, secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization, regretted the desecration of the shrine and asked the Indian Government to refrain from attacking Muslim holy places in occupied Kashmir. He also asked the Indian Government to end its brutal operations and allow the Kashmiri people to determine their own future in accordance with UN resolutions.

Azad Kashmir President Sikander Hayat Khan has condemned the lighting of fires at the shrine and emphasized that Muslims the world over as well as the international community should play their role in ending the brutality of Indian troops in occupied Kashmir. Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan has sent telegrams to the presidents of the United States and France, the British prime minister, and the chancellor of Germany asking them to intervene to end the Indian siege of the Hazratbal Shrine. Thousands of people in the Bangladesh capital of Dhaka marched on the streets to condemn the Indian troops' siege of the shrine.

'Fierce' Clashes Reported

BK1810143693 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1410 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] Reports from occupied Kashmir speak of fierce clashes between the mojahedin and Indian troops following the desecration of Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar. Twenty-three mojahedin were martyred in an encounter with occupation forces in Baramula and Bandipur areas. Reports say fighting continued for several hours, during which a number of Indian soldiers were also killed. Over 20 people were rounded up during crackdown in Srinagar and Badgam.

Meanwhile widespread strike and demonstrations have been reported across the occupied valley against the sacrilege by Indian troops of Hazratbal. Vast areas of Srinagar and its suburbs are under curfew. Life came to a standstill due to strike and protest demonstrations.

Situation around the holiest shrine in occupied Kashmir continues to be tense. The army and paramilitary troops are patrolling the area. An AFP report says army moved forward light artillery, rocket launchers, and mortars close to the shrine gate. Hundreds of pilgrims are still trapped in the shrine which has been besieged by the Black Cat commandos of the Indian army.

Hundreds of Kashmiri people demonstrated in Rawalpindi today to protest against the continuing siege of Hazratbal shrine by the Indian troops. The protest demonstration was organized by the Jammu-Kashmir All-Party Hurriyyat [Freedom] Conference and Dukhtaran-i-Kashmir [daughters of Kashmir]. Large number of women also attended the procession. The participants urged the world community to take notice of this ruthless Indian action and force it to halt human rights violations and desecration of holy places.

Bhutto Denies Accepting Power-Sharing With Sharif

BK1510024893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Text] Benazir Bhutto, the cochairperson of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP], has said that the Pakistan Democratic Front and its allies have a majority, and we are confident that we will form governments at the federal level as well as in Punjab, Sind, and the North-West Frontier Province. Briefing reporters after presiding over a meeting of the newly elected National Assembly members belonging to the PPP, Pakistan Muslim League-Junejo [PML-J] group, and allied parties in Islamabad last night, she said the meeting decided to nominate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani of the PPP for the post of National Assembly speaker, while a PML-J candidate will be nominated for the post of chief minister of Punjab Province.

Bhutto said the newly elected PPP members of the Sind assembly will meet in Karachi on Saturday to decide on the party candidate for the chief ministership of the province. She said she will hold further discussions with the Muhajir Qaumi Movement to seek their support at the provincial level.

The PPP cochairperon categorically denied reports that her party has accepted any formula for power-sharing with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz group. She, however, said that if any step is taken in the best interest of the country, then her doors will be open for that. She added that the participation of two parties in matters of national interest will be welcomed.

Bhutto, Sharif Reject Coalition

BK1510161593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 Oct 93

[Text] Ms. Benazir Bhutto, cochairperson of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] has ruled out the possibility of power sharing and said that everything will be decided at the National Assembly. She was talking to newsmen at Parliament House after taking oath as a member of the National Assembly this afternoon. She denied that a formula for sharing power has been evolved. She asked how this question arises when the PPP has the majority in the assembly? The PPP cochairperson said that the people have already given their mandate and now is the time to respect this verdict.

Referring to the current situation, Benazir Bhutto said that the nation expects every elected representative to adopt a responsible approach and sincerely work for the people. She said that it is not the time to acquire a residential plot, amass wealth, or fulfill personal interests; it is time to prove one's worth as an elected member of the people. Ms. Benazir Bhutto added that every responsible person should play his role in strengthening the democratic process in the country.

Referring to problems facing the country, she said that there is a need to tactfully improve the country's debt-ridden economy and Pakistan's international image. She declared that she will continue to support the Kashmiri people in their struggle at every level on moral and humanitarian grounds. The PPP cochairperson stressed the need to improve Pakistan's relations with India, the United States, Japan, Russia, and Europe. She said that Pakistan will fulfill its responsibilities to uphold the rights of Muslims throughout the world and highlight the message of Islam in its real sense.

Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, president of the Pakistan Muslim League- Nawaz Group [PML-N], said that his party does not believe in the politics of confrontation and agitation and it will not involve itself in destabilizing the democratic process. Talking to newsmen after the meeting of the PML-N parliamentary party in Islamabad this afternoon, he said that the National Assembly has a split mandate and no party is a majority party in the assembly. He said that despite this, the politicians should play a role which helps the democratic and developmental process in the country. Replying to a question, he said that his party, whether in the government or in the opposition, wants to maintain healthy and cordial relations and it will not engage itself in a confrontation with any other party or in destabilizing it. He said that the parliamentary party has rejected the idea of either forming any kind of coalition government with the PPP or sharing power with it. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif said that the PML-N parliamentary party has decided to nominate Gauhar Ayub Khan for the post of speaker of the National Assembly.

In a brief chat after taking oath in the National Assembly, Mohammad Nawaz Sharif said that the country is moving toward the path of democracy and it is now our duty to strengthen democracy.

Power-Sharing Formula 'Baseless'

BK1610143893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 16 Oct 93

[Text] The federal cabinet, which met in Islamabad today under the chairmanship of the caretaker prime minister, Mr. Moin Qureshi, approved a five-year plan for population welfare. The plan envisages bringing down the present growth rate of 2.9 to 2.6 by mid 1998. It also contemplates providing 56 million people with population welfare facilities. The plan will cover 70 percent of the rural population. The existing coverage stands at 5 percent. The cabinet also finalized recommendations for the prevention of corruption in society after studying Justice Samdani's report on the subject. Justice Samdani in his report has recommended setting up an institution for the purpose instead of taking up cases individually. The cabinet also forward recommendations for the improvement of environment for the consideration of the elected government. Governors and chief ministers of all the four provinces attended the meeting.

Later, briefing newsmen on the decisions of the cabinet, the federal minister for information and broadcasting, Mr. Nisar Memon, said the power-sharing formula being discussed in a section of the press is baseless and the cabinet has no knowledge of it. The cabinet did not discuss any such formula as it has nothing to do with the caretaker government.

In reply to a question about captivity of certain elected representatives, the minister said such a matter does not exist; therefore, the cabinet did not take up the question. He hoped the transfer of power process will be peacefully completed according to the plan of the caretaker government.

Sharif Party Nominates Jatoi as Prime Minister

BK1710031093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] In Pakistan, in a surprise move, Mr. Nawaz Sharif's party has nominated former caretaker prime minister, Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, as its candidate for prime ministership. The election of the new prime minister is scheduled for Tuesday [19 October]. Ms. Benazir Bhutto is the candidate of her party.

Meanwhile, the election of the speaker of the newly-constituted National Assembly is to take place this morning. The contest is between Ms. Bhutto's nominee, Mr. Yusuf Raza Gilani, and the PML [Pakistan Muslim League] candidate, Mr. Gauhar Ayub Khan.

In another development, Ms. Benazir Bhutto has nominated Syed Abdullah Shah as the new chief minister of the Sindh Province. Our Islamabad correspondent, Suresh Chopra, reports that Mr. Abdullah Shah's selection has come as a surprise as he was not considered to be in the running for the post. It may be recalled that in the recently-elected elections, Ms. Bhutto's party secured outright majority in the Sindh assembly.

Bhutto Candidates Win Parliamentary Posts

BK1710113893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and Syed Zafar Ali Shah, both of Pakistan People's Party, have been elected and deputy speaker respectively of the National Assembly. Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani polled 106 votes as against 90 bagged by Mr. Gauhar Ayub Khan of Pakistan Muslim League [PML]-Nawaz group. Syed Zafar Ali Shah received 115 votes as compared 81 of Haji Mohammad Nawaz Khokhar of PML-Nawaz Group. Presiding officer for the election of speaker, Mr. Mahmud Khan Achakzai, administered the oath to the new speaker, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, who later administered the oath to the deputy speaker, Syed Zafar Ali Shah.

Amidst thumping of desk, the new speaker occupied his seat. In his brief remarks, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani thanked members for reposing confidence in him and extended a word of praise also for those who voted against him. He assured the members that he would treat them equally without any consideration as it is a part of democracy.

The outgoing speaker, Mr. Gauhar Ayub Khan, who also contested the election for the office of the speaker, immediately after the announcement of the result walked up to the seat of Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and embraced and congratulated him on his elections.

Sharif Accepts Speaker's Election

BK1710142893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Excerpts] Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and Syed Zafar Ali Shah of the Pakistan People's Party have been elected as speaker and deputy speaker of the National Assembly. [passage omitted]

In an interview with Pakistan television correspondent Azhar Masood, the cochairperson of Pakistan People's Party [PPP], Ms. Benazir Bhutto, said the first step of the democratic process in the National Assembly has been completed, and a joint candidate of the PPP and Pakistan Muslim league-Junejo Group has won. We are happy over this victory. She said the people have given their verdict. There is no big margin between the votes, but governments continue in democratic countries even with a single vote majority. Ms. Benazir Bhutto said we will fulfill our national responsibility.

In an interview with our correspondent Qamar Moiyudin, the president of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Group, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, said we accept the verdict of the legislators. The election was conducted in a democratic way. The majority has to decide in a democracy, and we bow before the verdict. He underlined the need for adopting clean politics which is in the supreme interest of the country and democracy.

Bhutto, Sharif on Chances of Forming Government

BK1710161093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 17 Oct 93

[Text] The cochairperson of Pakistan People's Party [PPP], Ms. Benazir Bhutto, has said PPP and PML-J [Pakistan Muslim League- Junejo Group] have established leading position for the formation of government by winning the slots of speaker and deputy speaker of the National Assembly. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad today, she said the Pakistan Democratic Front will form the government at the Center and at the provincial level which will enable it to run the state's affairs without any confrontation. She said it will be good for the development of the country if the same party heads the government at the central and provincial level.

The president of Pakistan Muslim League [PML]-Nawaz Group, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, has said his party accepts the decision of the majority in the National Assembly. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad after the election of speaker and deputy speaker, he said there was very small difference of vote between the candidates of two parties for the post of speaker. He said the situation will be more clear on the 19th of this month when open elections to choose the leader of the house will be held. Referring to PML-Nawaz Group's position with regard to formation of government in provinces, he said ANP [Awami National Party] in NWFP [Northwest Frontier Province] is our ally, while for the (?first time) PML has got largest seats than any other party in Punjab during the recent elections. Our chances for formation of governments in the Punjab and NWFP are bright.

Sharif To Run Against Bhutto for Prime Minister

BK1810050093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] In Pakistan, the newly-elected provincial assemblies of the Punjab, Balochistan, Sindh, and North-West Frontier Province are being convened today. Over the next two days, the new speakers and chief ministers will be elected. In Punjab Province, while the Pakistan People's Party and PML [Pakistan Muslim League]-Junejo combine has nominated Mr. Manzur Ahmad Wattoo as its candidate for the chief minister's post, the PML-Nawaz Group is yet to announce its nominee.

Meanwhile, the high command of the PML-Nawaz Group held an emergency meeting last night and reversed its earlier decision to nominate Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi as its candidate for the prime minister's post, and has decided to field Mr. Nawaz Sharif against Ms. Benazir Bhutto. AIR [All India Radio] correspondent Suresh Chopra reports that in spite of yesterday's defeat during the speaker's election, Mr. Nawaz Sharif is determined to put up a tough fight during the election for the prime minister tomorrow. Speaking to newsmen in Islamabad, he charged his opponents of indulging in horse trading.

Bhutto, Sharif Nominators Named

BK1810092393 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0900 GMT 18 Oct 93

[Text] Benazir Bhutto, cochairperson of the Pakistan People's Party, and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Group President Mohammad Nawaz Sharif filed their nomination papers today for the election of the leader of the House in the National Assembly [on 19 October]. Benazir Bhutto's name for the leader of the House was proposed by Sardar Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari, Mohammad Afzal, Nawab Mohammad Yusuf Talpur, Ghulam Akbar Lasi, Dr. Sher Afzal Khan Niazi and Kishan Chand Parwari. Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Gauhar Ayub Khan, Dost Mohammad Faizi, Abdul Matin Khan, Mian Mohammad Yasin Khan Wattoo and Haji Mohammad Nawaz Khokhar proposed the name of Mohammad Nawaz Sharif for the leader of the House. Scrutiny of nomination papers will be held this afternoon.